

Comprehensive Capital Project Update
September 2023 Edition
Josh Morse – Public Buildings Commissioner

Countryside School Project

Schematic Design | Option 1A - View of Front Plaza



Schematic Design | Option 1A - View from Playground



Schematic Design | Lobby - View from Dedham Street Entry



28

The Countryside School project is currently in the feasibility and schematic design phase in partnership with the Massachusetts School Building Authority, MSBA.

We recently had the opportunity to present an update to the Conservation Commission to begin to work with them on the design details for this project. While we of course will be meeting all the laws and regulations with respect to the adjacent wetlands and brook, we are looking at this project as an opportunity to do so much more. Not only will the new school be located above the 500-year floodplain, but our current plans improve upon the existing conditions by reducing the impervious surfaces, increasing the stormwater storage capacity on site by 26,135 cubic feet, and we're working to reduce the amount of stormwater that leaves our site via the wetlands or brook. This will be accomplished by rain and pollinator gardens, porous pavement on our parking lot, and possibly an infiltration system in the higher elevation on the site. Of course, it also helps that we are removing the existing building that has a very large below ground basement which is currently below the water table, and which displaces a large amount of stormwater storage capacity.

We just wrapped up the draft stormwater and geotechnical reports which will be posted once they're ready. There was nothing found in the borings or surveys that will present any issues with respect to the current design and site plan for the new school.

In a few weeks, we will be drilling a test well to further refine our approach to heating and cooling the new school. At this time, we are moving forward with ground sourced heat pumps, also known as geothermal. This will allow us to create an incredibly energy efficient school, and we're excited to work through the federal and utility incentive and rebate programs which will cover up to 50% of the capital cost for this type of heating and cooling system.

Our most recent presentation was to the Design Review and Countryside School Building Committees and community on August 23rd. You can watch the meeting recording [here](#) and see the presentation [here](#).

At this point in the design, we are preparing to begin the site plan approval process. The first step of this will be an update to the Public Facilities Committee of the City Council on Wednesday, October 18th.

We've still got a tremendous amount of design work left to do, but you can review all project information, presentations, and materials at countrysideelementaryschoolproject.com.

We anticipate starting construction in the summer of 2025 and completing construction in the summer of 2027.

If you have any questions or comments about this project, you can email us at countryside@newtonma.gov. The next Design Review and Countryside School Building Committee and Community meeting is on Wednesday, October 11th at 6:00pm and you can join the meeting once it begins by clicking [here](#).

Lincoln-Eliot School Project



PROPOSED PAINTS



PROPOSED FLOORING



PROPOSED MILLWORK



The view above is what staff, students, and parents will see as they enter the school. The library has become the heart of the school, with great sight lines, ample natural light, and a welcoming feel.



The auditorium is also taking shape. This will be an incredible asset for Lincoln-Eliot and the entire community.



You'll see in the above image that we have been working with the staff, community, building committee, and design review committee to deliver an addition that helps place the emphasis on the

new main entrance, while creating an addition that respects the existing building and the surrounding neighborhood.

The Lincoln-Eliot School project is currently in the bidding phase. We have prequalified many general and trades contractors, and the bids will be opened next month. The project is on track to begin selective demolition in the winter of 2024, and complete construction in the summer of 2025. The following is the project milestone schedule:

**PROJECT SCHEDULE
UPDATE**

2023

July 12	DRC/SBC Meeting
July 13	90% Bid Documents Review
July 27	Comments due from DRC (2 weeks)
Aug. 9 or 16	DRC/SBC Meeting DRC Vote on 90% Bid Documents
Aug. 31	Final Construction/Bid Documents
Sept. 7	Bid Phase
Nov. 2	Award / Start Construction, 18-month duration

2025

May 1	Complete Construction
July/Aug	School Move-in

DRC – Design Review Committee, SBC – School Building Committee

On July 12th, we gave a presentation to the Design Review Committee and a recording of that meeting can be viewed [here](#).

Once we begin construction, we will start our monthly community construction meetings. Additional information about these meetings will be provided when we get closer to breaking ground. A Groundbreaking ceremony will be held and we're targeting early December for this event.

If you have any questions or comments about this project, you can email us at lincolneliot@newtonma.gov, or you can check out our project website at lincolneliot-necp-projects.com.

Franklin School Project

Site Option A2

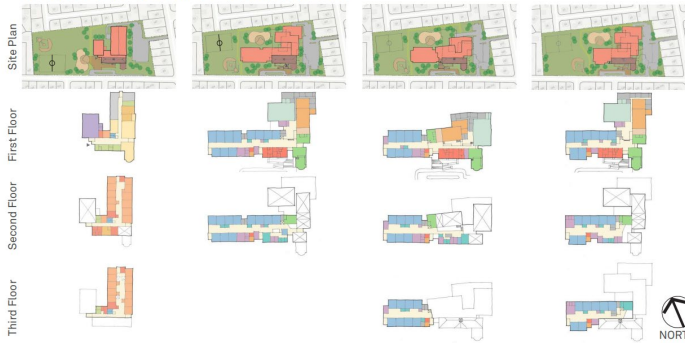


FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

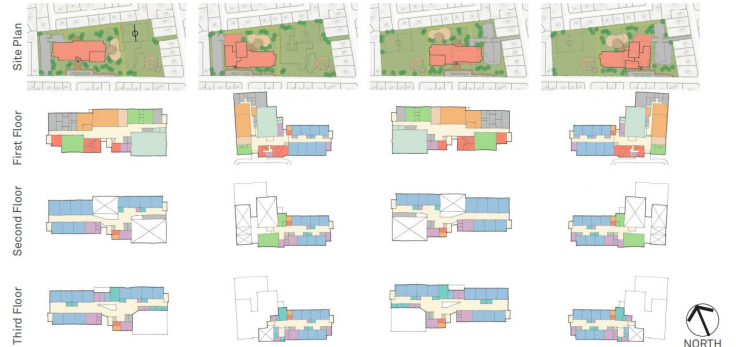
OPTION A2

The above option is one of dozens, (as seen below), that we are currently studying for the Franklin School Project, but it is the approach that the Franklin School staff near unanimously supported during the visioning session.

Addition/ Renovation Studies Matrix



New Construction Studies Matrix



The above images show just a handful of the various design concepts that we've studied and presented to date.

Site Options

Option A1



FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LEMON BROCKE
OPTION A1
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

Option A2



FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LEMON BROCKE
OPTION A2
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

Option B1



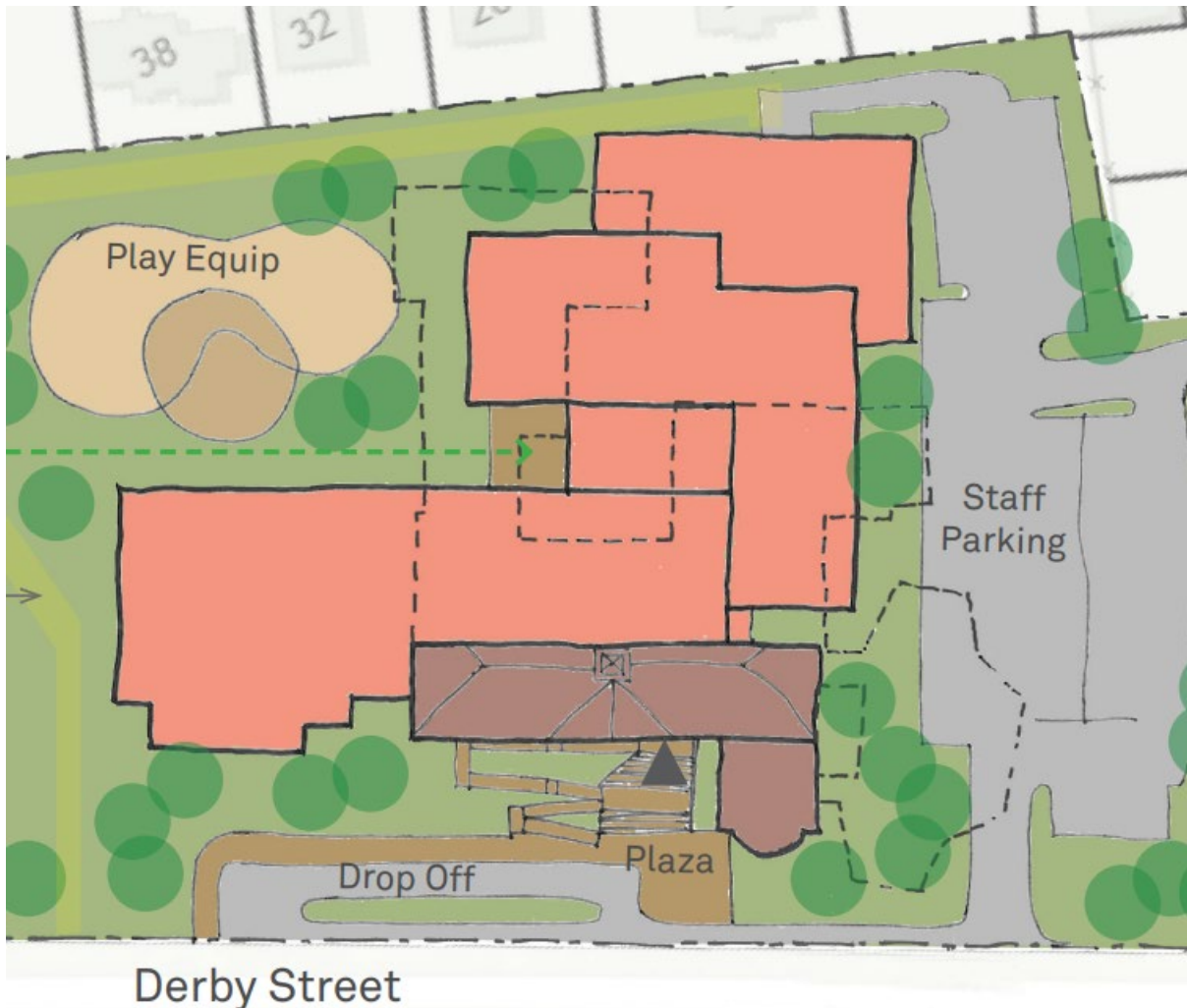
FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LEMON BROCKE
OPTION B1
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

In the coming months we will be working with the Franklin community, neighborhood, and stakeholders to decide on new construction versus addition and renovation.

We've started to hear what stakeholders see as the opportunities and challenges for maintaining a portion of the existing building. While we've got lots more outreach left to do, the below is a running list of what we have heard so far.

Opportunities and Challenges Associated with Maintaining a Portion of the Existing Franklin School

Maintaining the entire existing Franklin School is impractical, would be a detriment to the education program, and would be significantly more expensive than new construction. Furthermore, the modification of the existing building would be so significant that the result would be extremely insensitive to the historic building. However, maintaining a portion of the existing building is viable and has several opportunities and challenges.



The dark brown portion in the above image would be the portion of the existing Franklin School building most viable to be maintained. This includes the primary façade on Derby Street, the pitched roof, and the cupola.

Opportunities:

1. Maintains a portion of the existing historical building.
2. Maintains the curb appeal of a historical building.

3. The classrooms in the portion of the existing building that could be maintained are positioned in a favorable north/south solar orientation.
4. Some of the interior architectural details found in historic buildings would be impractical in a new building.

Challenges:

1. The main floor of the existing building is fourteen feet above grade, requiring ramps, stairs, and lifts at the original entrance to the facility.
2. The renovation/addition is estimated to cost \$10M or more than new construction.
3. The renovation/addition would mean a longer construction schedule, displacing and/or impacting students for a longer period.
4. The renovation/addition requires a larger building site footprint, limiting onsite parking, green space, and other site amenities.
5. Although the program can be met, the renovation/addition approach requires compromises in how we achieve that program from a site, building design, and floorplan perspective.
6. The only viable renovation and addition options save a small portion of the overall existing building. Therefore, the environmental benefits of embodied carbon reduction by saving a portion of the existing building are outweighed by the increased carbon footprint resulting in heating, cooling, and maintaining a larger volume of space.
7. The renovation/addition would prevent the option of keeping the Franklin students in their neighborhood during construction. Students would need to be bused/driven to the swing school at 191 Pearl Street for two years.
8. To maintain the original historical main entrance as the primary entrance, the modifications needed to comply with universally accessible design features would result in a drastically altered façade that would look significantly different than the current building and would be historically insensitive.
9. To maintain the original historical main entrance and façade without major modifications, the primary entrance would need to be shifted to the new construction addition portion of the building. The original historical façade and entry would then be overshadowed by the new construction portion of the building. This approach would also be insensitive to the historic nature of the existing building.

The opportunities and challenges that we've heard for the new construction approach are pretty much the inverse of the above list. If you've got more to add to this list, please let me know.

Our Owner's Project Manager is currently working to transition from the project website on Newton's page, to a privately hosted and maintained website.

Our next Franklin School Building Committee and Community meeting will be on Thursday, October 5th at 6:00pm. You can register in advance for this meeting by clicking [here](#). **At this meeting we will be working toward building consensus on the preferred design concept. This will determine whether the existing building will be demolished, and if the decision is to demolish the existing school, this decision will also impact whether students can stay in the existing school while a new school is built.**

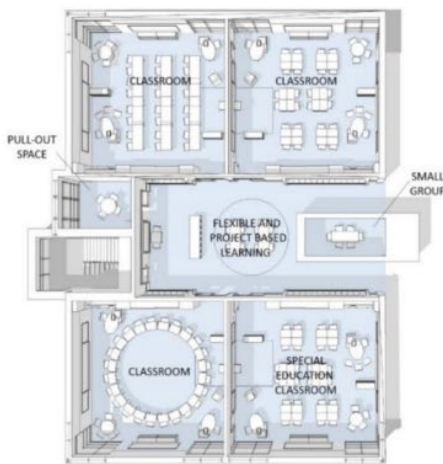
We have also completed borings throughout the site including the fields and there were no issues encountered that will present any challenges at all with regards to the various design concepts. The site topography is more challenging where the current school is located, but aside from that the site is close to ideal.

We anticipate starting construction in the summer of 2025 and completing construction in the summer of 2027.

To review the presentation, project information, and materials you can go to our project website [here](#). If you have any questions or comments about this project, you can email us at franklin@newtonma.gov.

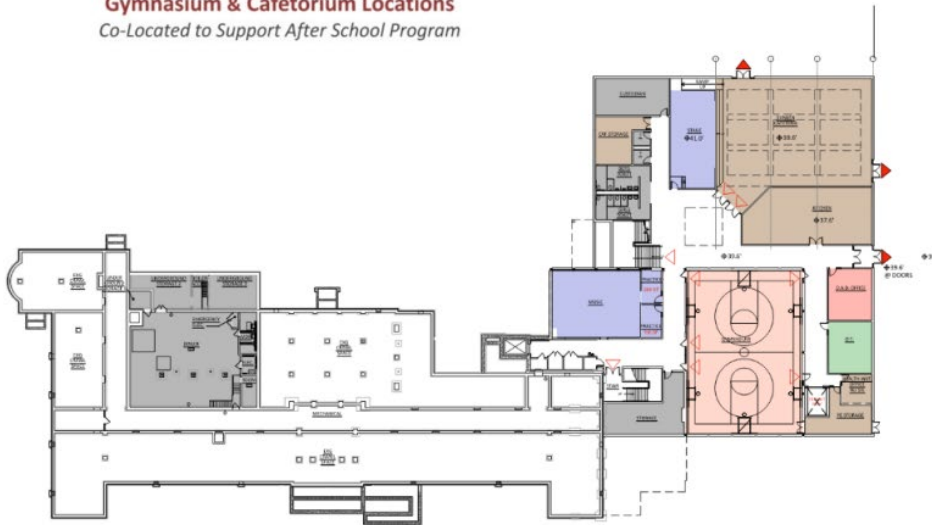
Horace Mann School Project

Project Areas / Breakout Rooms



Option D.8 School Program – Lower Level

Gymnasium & Cafetorium Locations Co-Located to Support After School Program



LOWER LEVEL



Over the past few months, we have organized several subconsultants to complete a site survey, test pits and borings to confirm the below ground conditions, and much more. The results from these surveys are all great, with no subsurface issues whatsoever. From a design perspective RDA Architects is working to show some options for how we can introduce a full basketball court into the site plan, as this was something that the Horace Mann community requested last fall when we paused the project. We've also spent a great deal of time working on the design approach for the modifications to the existing building. Our goal is to deliver everything that we committed to, but in the least intrusive manner possible. We made some great advances in this area, and we look forward to presenting the updates and refinements to the Horace Mann School Building and Design Review Committees and Community.

Our next meeting of the Horace Mann School Building and Design Review Committees and Community will be on Thursday, September 28th at 6:00pm. You can register in advance for this meeting [here](#).

To learn more about this project you check out our website [here](#). If you have any questions or comments about this project, you can email us at horacemann@newtonma.gov.

Newton Center for Active Living, NewCAL, Project



Walnut Street and Highland Avenue



Walnut Street and Walnut Place

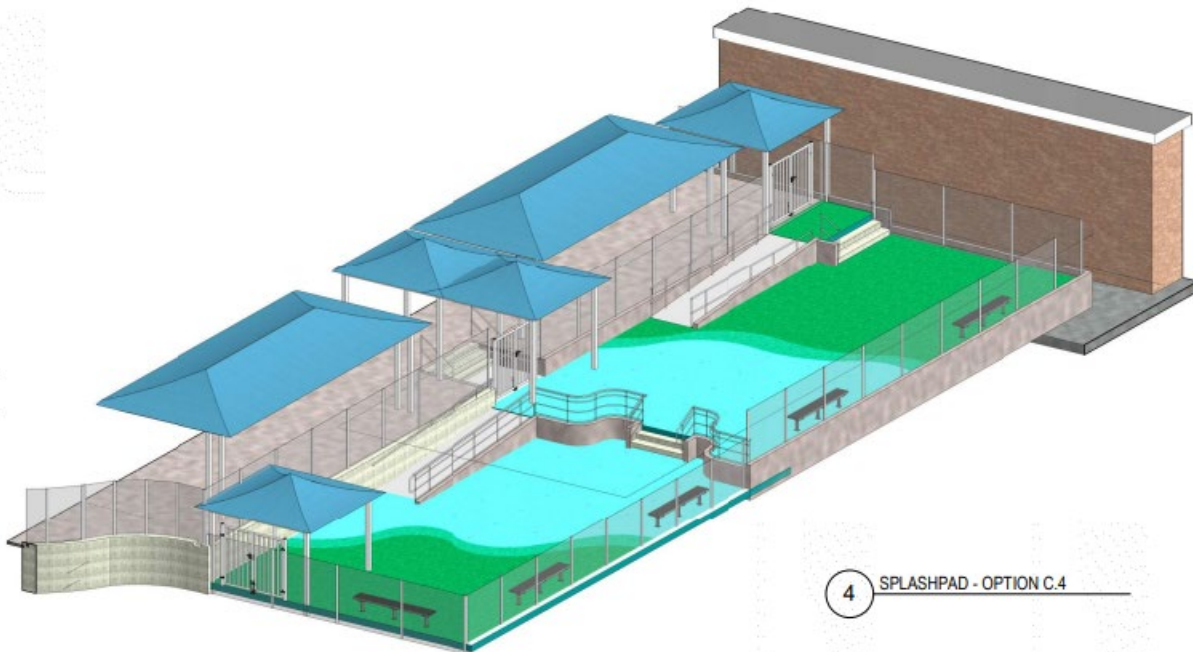
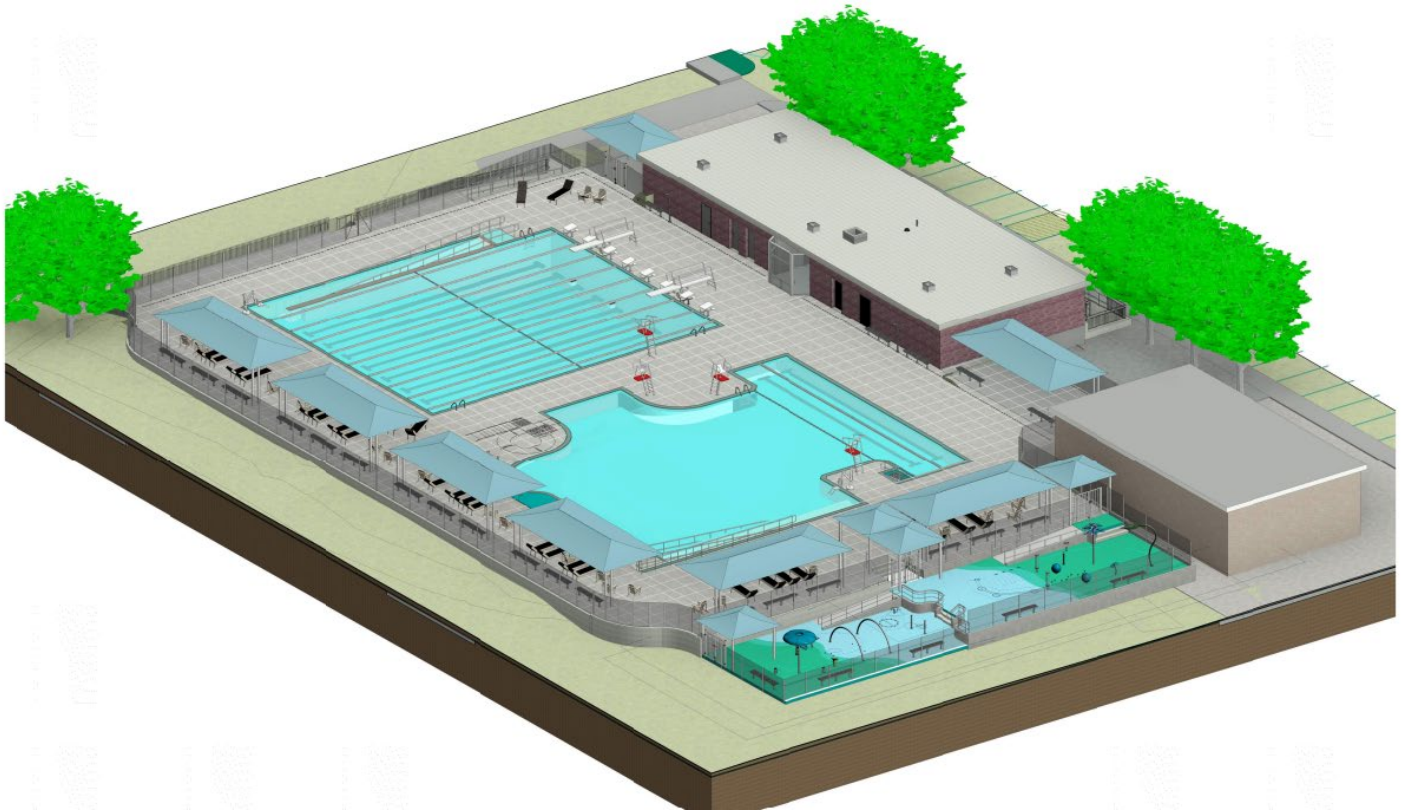
The Newton Center for Active Living, NewCAL, Project is currently out to bid. We previously bid the project, and we received a single general contractor bid well above our professional cost estimates, it was in the best interest of everyone to readvertise and seek additional bidders. Our team has been in touch with hundreds of bidders over the past few weeks to help ensure our efforts are successful. This process will extend our project schedule by roughly 3 months. We anticipate starting construction this winter and completing it in the winter/spring of 2025.

Prior to starting construction, we will have a community meeting to discuss the construction activities, project schedule, impacts, and we'll answer any questions that our residents may have.

In the meantime, if you have any questions at all about the project, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Additional project info, meeting recordings, and presentations can be found at newcal.projects.nv5.com. If you have any questions or comments about this project, you can email us at newcal@newtonma.gov.

Gath Pool Project



4 SPLASHPAD - OPTION C.4

The Gath Pool Project was publicly bid last month. Our contractor is now onboard and working through the permitting process. Construction will begin in the coming weeks. This fall the demolition of the pool deck and shell will be completed, and the new pool will be constructed. This winter the contractor will move into the bathhouse where they will complete the interior building upgrades and the installation of the new pool filtration, chemical, and other support systems. Once spring comes,

they will move back outside to complete the railings, finishes, and features in the pool, splashpad, and deck.

We are slated to complete construction next spring in advance of the 2024 swim season.

The new pool design and all previous project materials can be viewed at <http://www.newtonma.gov/gathpoolproject>.

The funding for this project is a share between ARPA funds applied by Mayor Fuller, state funds secured by Representative Khan, and a large amount of funding from the Community Preservation Committee.

If you have any questions or comments about this project, you can email us at gathpool@newtonma.gov.

Ward and Underwood School Initiative

In fall 2022, the Newton Public Schools established a task force and contracted with a consultant to address facility, educational, and enrollment challenges at Underwood and Ward elementary schools. As documented by the previous work of a prior task force, both Underwood and Ward occupy buildings that are nearly 100 years old and both schools are experiencing enrollment declines that are impacting the educational experience of students.

Newton Public Schools initiated the Underwood and Ward Facility and Enrollment Study to look at the future of the two schools. Mayor Fuller allocated \$100,000 in ARPA funds to hire a consulting firm to work with a task force to identify options to address facility, educational and enrollment challenges. The Public Buildings Department worked with the Designer Selection Committee, DSC, to publicly advertise and solicit proposals from various firms to assist with this initiative. [Perkins Eastman](#) was unanimously recommended by the DSC and subsequently approved by Mayor Fuller.

A task force made up of parents, principals, educators, our consultants, School Committee and City Council members, and staff from the City and Newton Public Schools met several times over the past few months.

To read a recent update on this initiative from Newton Public Schools Superintendent Nolin please click [here](#). To read more about this initiative please click [here](#). We are currently supporting Newton Public Schools in obtaining additional facility and program information.

Police Facility Project

Using ARPA funds previously authorized by Mayor Fuller, we have been working on a comprehensive project to improve the physical conditions of Police Headquarters, and the Police Annex and Garage. While we are still very early on in the process, we know that this project will result in a significant improvement in the Police facility infrastructure.

Complementing the investment of more than \$2M for the replacement of the HVAC system, and information technology and communications upgrades, the Police Facility Project includes but is not limited to upgrades to the following building systems and areas:

- Security
- Accessibility
- Electrical
- Lighting
- Plumbing
- Roof
- Masonry
- Finishes

In addition to the improvements to the building systems, this project will evaluate how best to utilize the spaces throughout the existing buildings. We will be evaluating how best to adjust the buildings and the use of the facilities to optimize the adjacencies and functions of the Newton Police Department.

One major priority of this project will be to create a new appropriately sized dispatch center, with the adjacent support spaces needed to train new dispatchers and to ensure that the Dispatch Division has everything they need to support Newton Police, Newton Fire, and the entire community. Although this is a major project priority, the improvements to the facilities will benefit every member of the Newton Police Department.

This project will also include a training room similar to the one shown below that was recently built for the Medford Police Department.



Our work to date has been focused on evaluating the existing conditions of the building systems in each of the three Police facilities, as well as the development of a program. The program is a document that identifies the space needs for every function in the department both now and in the future. I often refer to this document as the recipe for the cake we're baking.

In the coming months we will be working with the City Council to bring their voices into the conversation and to schedule our first community meeting to start the conversation on that front as well.