



Framingham Public Schools

Robert A. Tremblay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Adam Freudberg, Chair • Tiffanie Maskell, Vice Chair • Priscila Sousa,
Clerk

Jessica Barnhill • Geoffrey Epstein
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Yvonne M. Spicer, Mayor
Fuller Middle School

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TO: Framingham City Council Finance Subcommittee
FROM: Adam Freudberg, Chair of the School Committee
CC: Scott Wadland, Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee Chair
Dr. Robert Tremblay, Lincoln Lynch, Matthew Torti
Mary Ellen Kelley, Thatcher Kezer, Jennifer Pratt, James
Snyder, Thomas Begin, Parks & Recreation Commission
DATE: Thursday, January 21, 2021
RE: Framingham Public Schools FY22 Capital Budget Request

On behalf of the Framingham School Committee I am submitting the following motion, details, and attachments seeking approval of the FY22 Capital Budget Request for the District in advance of our joint subcommittee meeting.

The School Committee submitted the annual capital plan request on October 7, 2020. In December, Mayor Spicer and CFO Kelly asked for a revised submission in light of budget limitations. The School Committee, after a Buildings & Grounds Subcommittee review on January 14, 2021, approved the revised request for City Council consideration on January 20, 2021.

School Committee Motion on January 20, 2021: To recommend to the City Council the revised recommendation for the FY22 Capital Budget Request of: \$600,000 for the MSBA Feasibility Study for a Future Elementary School, \$1,100,000 for Exterior Envelope at the Walsh School, \$1,606,335 for the joint project of turf fields at the new Fuller Middle School, and \$1,826,975 for roof repairs at the Farley building, for a total of \$5,133,310, and to fund \$300,000 of ADA compliance upgrades from the FY21 Operating Budget.

Moved by: Mr. Wadland

Second: Ms. Hugo

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous 8-0-0 (Yes: Ms. Hugo, Mr. Wadland, Mr. Freudberg, Ms. Sousa, Mr. Epstein, Ms. Maskell, Ms. Barnhill, Mr. LaBarge)

The School Committee looks forward to the joint meeting of the City Council's Finance Subcommittee and School Committee's Buildings & Grounds Subcommittee.

Thank you for your consideration.

FY22 Capital Plan Background

The School Committee's request seeks to fund what is sorely needed so students, staff, and our community can benefit. These projects and the district's capital planning process seek to invest in priority needs, as well as save money in the long-term by prioritizing preventative maintenance and health safety projects, utilizing existing infrastructure, and fully using warranties and cost effective contract vehicles in partnership with municipal departments.

Exterior upgrades, recreation, strategic planning, and working on long-term roof infrastructure challenges were prioritized by the committee. With this plan, we have teamed up with the Superintendent, Buildings and Grounds, Safety and Security, Division of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs, and the DPW to create an opportunity to make limited strategic investments to support our current students and educators, as well as the generations to come.

Continuing to jump start the planning process with a study helps Framingham gain the option to access tens of millions of dollars of state funding in order to fix a major gap in our community by seeking to continue planning for an early childhood center and elementary school south of Route 9.

The School Committee proposes this revised request of \$5,133,310 after the initial request of \$8,328,070. This was determined after reviewing an initial Buildings and Grounds Department FY22 request of more than \$15 million. This includes a Joint Project Addendum with the Division of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs of \$3,212,670, with half from the FPS capital budget, and half from Parks.

If approved, the continuation of the annual capital plan's implementation will support the 9,000+ students, 1,800+ employees, and members of the community who utilize schools on evenings and weekends at sites across the City of Framingham.

While the total amount requested is significant, it pales in comparison to the total backlog of school maintenance that has accumulated over the years, and is millions less than the original request to Mayor Spicer. Going forward, we stand ready to work with the Mayor, CFO, City Council and SIFOC (Strategic Investment and Financial Oversight Committee) on a long-term plan that addresses required maintenance while still allowing us to take advantage of opportunities to make strategic investments in our facilities.

We are grateful to Mayor Spicer for her time and attention to the capital plan as she also serves as a member of the School Committee. We are enthusiastic and willing partners ready to appear

before the City Council's Finance Subcommittee as we seek final authorization in a timely manner so work can begin, and students and school communities across the entire city can benefit.

FY22 Capital Budget Project Summary

The following projects were carefully selected as part of the FPS multi-year capital planning process. Projects proposed and supported by FPS and School Committee in order of priority are:

1. *Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Feasibility Study for a Future Early Childhood Center and Elementary School - \$600,000*

- A Pre-Feasibility Study for the renovation/replacement of an Elementary School was conducted by TBA Architects the summer and fall of 2019. This study included review of the Hemenway Elementary School site as well as property south of Route 9. Currently, the District has a limited number of schools south of Route 9. The District's Long-Range Facility Plan calls for a periodic renovation/replacement of three elementary schools over the next 10-15 years. Developing a school south of Route 9 would serve the entire city well by improving school accessibility, addressing PreK access gaps, and reducing transportation costs by reducing the number of students who require busing across the district in the current school choice model. In multiple votes during the fall/winter of 2020 the School Committee voted to make the pursuit of this new school south of Route 9 a top priority. This included voting to enter into the MSBA Statement of Interest process, as well as seeking this funding through the capital budget allocations to prepare for the MSBA's eventual invitation into their Capital Pipeline. Over the years the town, now the city, has also scheduled for their share of the new school as part of the long-term capital plan. In order to participate in the MSBA reimbursement program, the City must first appropriate \$600,000 for a Full Feasibility Study. This study is required to comply with MSBA guidelines in order for the City to receive an estimated reimbursement rate of approximately 57% for a school construction project.

2. *Exterior Envelope Improvements to roofs, walls, windows, and doorways at Walsh Middle School - \$1,100,000 (reduced from initial request of \$2,156,095)*

- The district's five year capital plan includes estimates for the exterior envelopes of all buildings. Each year the top project(s) are identified as priorities where urgent work is needed to repair or replace exterior walls, windows and sealant systems and associated components. FY21 projects were previously funded and are now in the construction process at Hemenway and Wilson Elementary Schools, Cameron and Walsh Middle Schools, BLOCKS Preschool at Juniper Hill, and the Transportation Building. This new request is for the exterior walls, windows and sealant systems and associated components to be removed and replaced or repaired at Walsh Middle School.

3. *Joint Athletic Field Project with the Division of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs at the New Fuller Middle School - \$1,606,335 from FPS, remaining half from Parks*

Additionally, the Framingham Public School Department and the City Division of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs, in coordination with the Fuller School Building Committee, are submitting a joint budget capital request for \$3,212,670 to fund two artificial turf playing fields at the new Fuller school site, with half coming from the FPS Capital allocation, and half from Parks. Currently, the City only has one turf field, located at Framingham High School, within its inventory of athletic facilities. This is below many other communities within the Baystate Conference. From a competitive standpoint, this has left the over 3,000 athletes participating in sports at Framingham High School, and all youth outdoor sports organizations, at a competitive disadvantage. Once this project is completed, it will provide the City with two fields that can provide use to a wide range of sports, including soccer; lacrosse; football; and field hockey. In addition, the field can be used for early season baseball and softball practices to allow those spring teams an opportunity to have equitable access to playing fields that athletes in other communities enjoy. An added benefit is that the students at the newly constructed Fuller Middle School will also have access to an outdoor recreational amenity for physical education classes and recesses for almost the entire calendar year. The School Department and Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Division believes that this project will be a huge benefit for the City and a source of pride for all students involved in outdoor, active recreation. This project was also approved 3-0 by the City's Parks and Recreation Commission on September 30th.

4. *Roof Repairs at the Farley Building - \$1,826,975*

- The Farley Middle School roof is in poor condition and moisture was observed at multiple roof test cuts. Additional roof deck repairs are necessary based on moisture on the deck, and areas of deterioration and rusting. Note this project was not in the Mayor's request. The School Committee has prioritized it due to the large backlog of roof projects across the District, and asks the City Council consider restoration. This spreadsheet on [Roof Needs, Costs, and Projected Escalation](#) shows the large need for roof repairs over the future years and annual cost escalation for each year of deferral. The Farley roof project has already been deferred. Continued deferral creates a public safety, financial, and operational challenge for the city and creates a domino effect of backlog and rising costs for other roof projects outlined on the spreadsheet. For more information about the Farley Building's usage, read [this memo](#).

The Future: Roofs and Long-Term Infrastructure Needs

During the recent meetings where the capital plan was discussed, School Committee Members and FPS leaders commented on the wide ranging needs the District's 15 buildings need over the next decade. Like most districts, FPS does have its share of infrastructure challenges. However, under the leadership of our Building and Grounds Department the district does a terrific job making our schools safe and attractive places to learn and work. The District is continuing to refine the previously published long-term capital plan which reflects the multiple other infrastructure needs required over the coming years. As of today, this plan summarizes the anticipated roof repairs/replacements, paving/environmental stormwater compliance, electrical, plumbing, security, exterior envelope improvements to walls, windows, doorways, and more. This long-term plan reflects an annual actual need of approximately \$12 million per year, with

urgent roof repairs planned as the top priority. During the meetings members commented on the cost savings that would come from investing in roof repairs sooner rather than later, with 6% construction escalation anticipated each year. The linked chart in the attachment section shows the roof needs, estimates, and anticipated rising costs over time.

COVID-19 Investments to Improve Public Health and Reduce Risk

Note that these FY22 requests are separate from COVID-19 related projects the District has undertaken this summer and fall, in partnership between FPS and the CFO/CPO. This includes approximately \$1.8 million funded by federal and state allocations to upgrade or install: window screen installations, air purifiers, water bottle filling stations, COVID-19 isolation rooms, hand sanitizer dispensers, air quality risk assessment study, air filter replacement and upgrades, and COVID-19 related signs and decals across the District.

FY22 Projects Requested by the School Committee and Deferred by the Mayor

1. ***Exterior Envelope Improvements to roofs, walls, windows, and doorways at Walsh Middle School - \$1,056,095 cut from initial request of \$2,156,095 (with \$1,100,000 requested in above section)***
 - See above for description
2. ***Paving and Stormwater Drainage Repairs at Walsh Middle School and McCarthy Elementary School - \$1,095,000***
 - Upgrades and repairs are necessary to the existing driveway, parking lots, and stormwater systems, and to ensure compliance with federal environmental and stormwater runoff requirements. At Walsh, pavement mill and overlay, new ADA compliant sidewalk and pedestrian ramps, parking and driveway restriping, and stormwater management system upgrades are needed. At McCarthy, pavement mill and overlay, new parking area expansion, new ADA compliant sidewalk and pedestrian ramps, parking and driveway restriping, and stormwater management system upgrades are needed.
3. ***ADA projects at multiple schools to support projects and compliance with curbs, sidewalks, handicap ramps/lifts, bathrooms, doors, and signage - \$300,000***
 - These funds would support the installation of a vertical wheelchair lift with enclosure, bottom floor ramp with gate power operator to be installed at the former lift location at the High School, as well as new toilets in the main entrance of the Farley Middle School to comply with ADA requirements. The School Committee. Thanks to the City Council and Disability Commission, \$20,000 towards the ADA project at FHS has already been allocated. The School Committee redirected intentional operating budget savings from other line items to cover urgent ADA needs so construction can begin this FY. Therefore, this request is no longer needed, avoiding the need to seek capital funding at this time.
4. ***Asbestos Abatement and Replacement at Brophy Elementary School - \$600,000***
 - This project is part of the district's proactive approach to follow the Department of Environmental Protection's requirements for all schools and address areas that

show signs of wear. Brophy Elementary School is one of several older schools that contain asbestos in ceilings, floors and pipe coverings above the ceilings that FPS has identified as needing attention. There is no imminent danger, so this project will remove asbestos before it becomes dangerous.

5. *Security Enhancements at multiple schools including security cameras and electronic door access systems - \$250,000*

- This request will further support and enhance the already robust security systems and measures at all schools. This includes enhancement function modules, badging system upgrades, wireless indoor/outdoor lockdown system, alarm upgrades, and access controls for doors.

6. *HVAC at McCarthy Elementary School - \$1,500,000*

- The project would add cooling to the existing McCarthy Elementary School HVAC systems. McCarthy was recommended next on the FPS list due to data analytics reflecting higher temperatures, especially on the second floor of the school. In the warmer months temperatures in some areas of the school can reach unhealthy levels in excess of 90-100 degrees. This project will include final design work, preparation of bid documents, specifications & plans, OPM services, construction oversight, construction and project closeout costs. Adding air conditioning will take advantage of the HVAC and electrical infrastructure already paid for and in place, while making the working and learning environments comfortable and safer for the McCarthy community.

Attachments

1. [FY22 Capital Project Narratives and Documentation](#)
2. [Roof Needs, Costs, and Projected Escalation](#)
3. [Farley Building Utilization](#)
4. [Fuller Turf Field Joint Request Project Details](#)
5. [Letter of Support for the Fuller Turf Field from the Parks and Recreation Commission](#)
6. [Memo on MSBA Process for a Future Elementary School and Childhood Center](#)
7. [Pre-Feasibility Study for Elementary and PreK Building Construction](#)