




Branford  
High  
School



Mary T. Murphy  
Elementary  
School

# Facilities Master Plan Update



Francis Walsh  
Intermediate  
School




Mary R. Tisko  
Elementary  
School



*BOE Personnel & Finance Committee*

*May 7, 2025*



John B. Sliney  
Elementary  
School



Indian  
Neck  
School

# Why BPS Is Doing This?

- Feasibility studies of John B Sliney (JBS) in 2013 and 2022
  - Extensive capital needs identified
  - Recommend potential repurpose of building
- BOE requests funding for new JBS in 2023, Town asks for BOE's long-range capital planning needs
  - Leaking BHS roof in need of replacement
  - Major mechanical systems at end of life, no capital schedule
  - Feasibility at INS in 2022

# What are We Trying to Solve?

**STRATEGIC GOALS:**

**GOAL 1:**  
Ensure equal opportunity for growth and development for all Branford students.

**GOAL 2:**  
Align the key systems in the district to support the student acquisition of Global Learning Competencies through the implementation of the Definition of Deep Learning.

**GOAL 3:**  
Improve the processes and tools that the district uses to communicate and engage critical stakeholders across the district so they can be more meaningful partners in the support of student learning.

**BRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**GLOBAL LEARNING COMPETENCIES**

**DEFINITION OF DEEP LEARNING**

Deep learning experiences prepare students to cognitively engage and connect in order to prepare for the demands of a rapidly changing, information-rich society. We aspire to provide dynamic learning experiences for students through:

**Feedback**  
Providing continuous skills development, recognizing progress at each stage, while incorporating mentoring, feedback, and support throughout the learning process.

**Content**  
Ensuring students progress from initial understanding to application of content by continuously reviewing and upgrading their knowledge and skills, using high-quality resources, and engaging in hands-on experiences.

**Context**  
Promoting intrinsic motivation and student engagement in the pursuit of learning by communicating high expectations within an environment of clear rules and procedures and nurturing relationships.

**Community**  
Cultivating a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture with colleagues, students, and families to optimize learning for educators and students.

- Currently on enrollment watch-list with State “Naughty list”
- Standardized approach to learning
- Improve student achievement
- Career pathways for students
- Achieve goals in strategic coherence plan
- Resilient facilities and infrastructure



# What are the Project Goals?

The 15-year Facilities Master Plan will provide a roadmap for strategic capital investments, ensuring our schools remain safe, functional, and adaptable to the needs of future generations.

- Phased approach to major renovations, with timelines and cost estimates
- Prioritized projects, balancing educational impact with financial responsibility
- Recommendations for critical repairs, replacements, and upgrades
- Comprehensive plans for all school facilities, including outdoor spaces
- ADA compliance and sustainability initiatives, considering climate resilience
- Long-term capital maintenance strategy to protect our investments



# Who is On the Project Management Committee?



Peter Berdon, BOE Chair

Meaghan Delucia, BOE

Jaime Cosgrove, First Selectman

Joseph Mooney, Board of Finance Chair

Joshua Brooks, RTM

Ray Ingraham, RTM

Jim Finch, Town Finance Director

Dr. Christopher Tranberg, Superintendent

Blaize Levitan, BPS Chief Operating Officer

Kimberly Castoro, BPS Director of Business Services (Project's Community Liaison)

Brenden Leddy, BPS Facilities Director



**JEFF WYSZYNSKI**  
AIA

*Principal-in-Charge /  
Primary Contact*



**EDDIE WIDOFSKY**  
AIA, LEED AP BD+C

*Senior Project  
Manager*



**ANTONIA CIAVERELLA**  
EDAC, LEED AP BD+C,  
WELL FACULTY, FITWEL

*Architectural Designer,  
Engagement Facilitator*



**LAURA HILL**

*Architectural Designer*

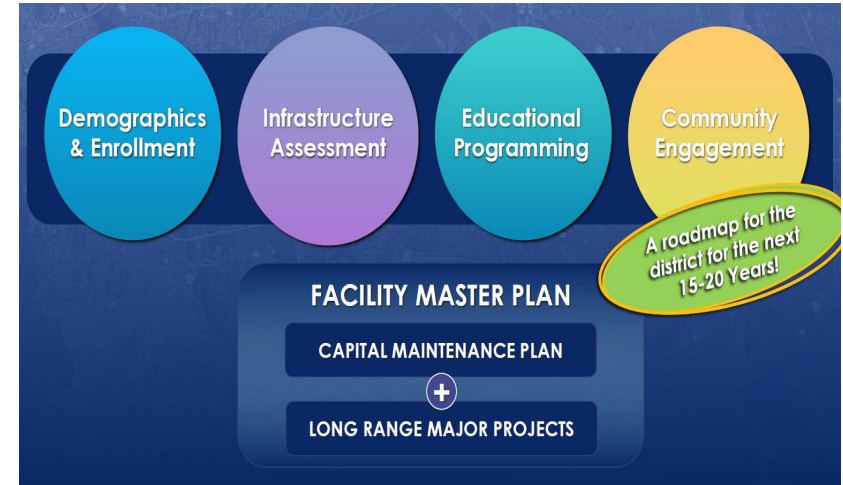


**BRADLEY PARK**

*Principal, MEP Engineering,  
CES*

# What Has Been Done?

- ✓ Student demographic and needs review
- ✓ Architectural and engineering assessments
- ✓ Analysis of pedagogical practices and program spaces
- ✓ Meetings with Administrators and Department Heads
- ✓ *Think Tanks* with educators, admins, parents, students, and partners
- ✓ GIS assessments of existing and potential properties
- ✓ Community survey and Community Conversations
- ✓ Consideration of all possible options (11 different paths)



## **Branford's Facility Master Plan**

*Impactful* community conversations

*Generational*, long term thought process

*Equitable*, facilitate access to education

*Best value*, financially responsible

*Creative solutions* to optimize space

*Elevate* educational environment

# What are the Next Steps?

1. Tecton Architects presents DRAFT Facilities Master Plan on **May 21st**
2. BOE adopts the Facilities Master Plan (planned **June 4, 2025**)
3. Facilities Master Plan built into **FY27** Capital Budget request
  - Off-cycle appropriation?

Through the Master Planning process,  
**We aim to create opportunities  
where the strategic plan can  
come to life.**

## Enhanced Engagement and Motivation

Specials can offer opportunities to explore different subjects and interests.

## Development of Social- Emotional Skills

Art, music, and physical education can foster teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.

## Complementary Learning

Complement and enhance core subject areas by providing different learning modalities and reinforcing concepts in creative ways.

## Academic Benefits

Improvements in reading comprehension, cognitive development, and other academic skills.

## Finding Hidden Talents

Help students discover hidden talents or passions, fostering a love for learning and encouraging self-expression.



# Some Background on Financials...

## What is Capital?

*Funds for the acquisition or maintenance of fixed assets, such as property, buildings, equipment, and technology.*

### **Major Projects**

- Building or grounds addition/renovation
- Change in use/purpose, expand program
- High upfront cost, long useful life

Ex - New building, major renovation to existing structure

### **Maintenance**

- Keep existing infrastructure in good condition
- Recurring cost based on type and age
- Formulaic, ie replace every 10 years

Ex - HVAC systems, boilers, roofs, window replacement, courts/sidewalks

### **New/Replace Equipment**

- Acquire/replace equipment of higher value, useful life
- Depreciation over time
- Connected to program offerings

Ex - Athletic equipment, computers and tech, security systems, furniture upgrades



# Remember Types of Capital Funding

## General Fund (Cash)

- Funded on a pay-as-you-go basis
- Limit the amount of outstanding debt and maintain favorable debt ratios
- Appropriated directly from general fund; part of tax levy

## Bond

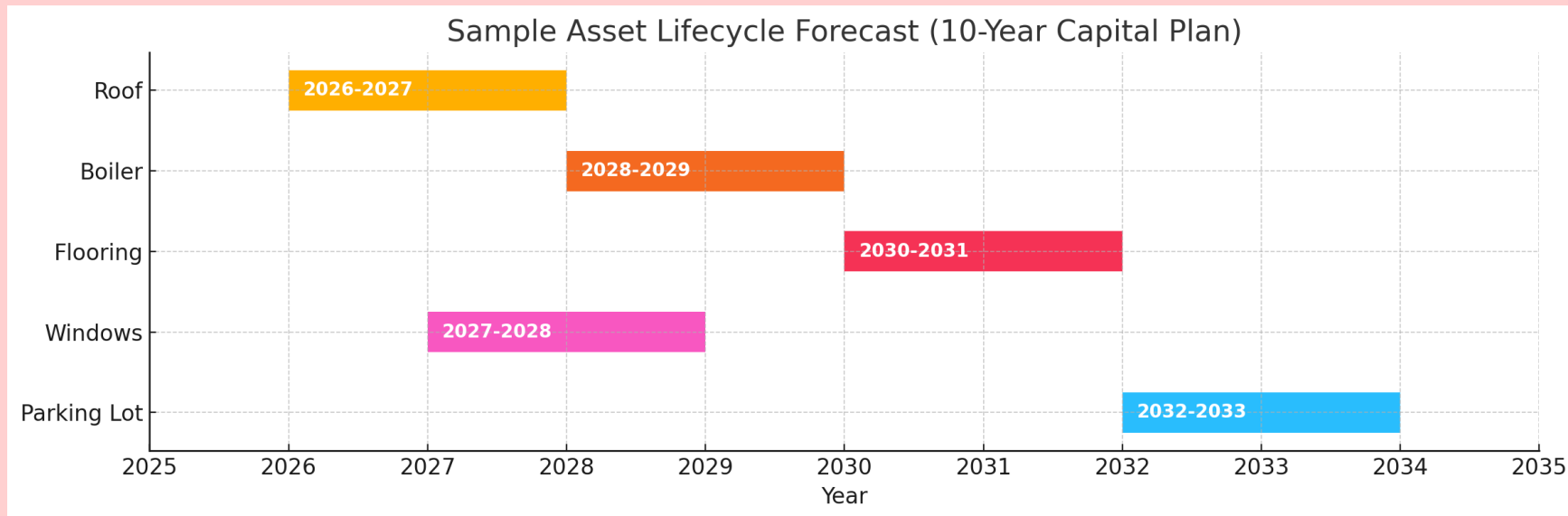
- Issue debt in form of bonds/notes
- Used for more significant cash requirements
- Added cost of debt service

## Lease

- Appropriation from Town lease fund
- Lease is form of borrowing
- Operating budget impact; contribute to lease fund annually (FY25 = ~\$250K)

# What Is A Capital Plan?

- Structured, long-term roadmap major physical assets like buildings, infrastructure, and equipment.
- Built on detailed asset inventories—all facilities and systems (roofs, HVAC, paving, etc.) should be mapped and documented.
- Uses lifecycle data to estimate when key systems will need replacement or renewal (no surprises).
- Helps prioritize projects based on urgency, condition, educational impact, and available funding.
- Spans 5–15 years or more, with cost estimates, timelines, and funding strategies.
- Informs annual budget and bond planning, reducing reactive or emergency spending.
- Promotes transparency and accountability—showing the public we’re stewarding assets wisely.
- Should be regularly updated to reflect completed work, changes in building use, or emerging needs.



# Town's Project Finance Guidelines

- **\$72-76M** net borrowing
  - after state reimbursement, asset sales, and applicable grants
- Debt service target of **8.5%**
- Budget growth of **4-5%**
- Interest rates **~4.1%**
- MUNI bonds remain **tax-exempt**

***Most Important:*** Financing strategy must align with the Town's debt capacity and fiscal policies.

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Date: February 20, 2025

To: BOE Planning Group

From: James Finch, Finance Director

Re: Guidance for Facility Study

I am writing following your recent request to provide guidance to the group as it relates to the development of the facility plan. As members of the group may recall I raised the issue of the potential gap between what is "aspirational and achievable" and the sister phrase which strikes the balance between what is "politically doable and financially feasible"

As you may be aware, the town often projects future debt service requirements for anticipated borrowing needs (projects) as well as a contingency. Admittedly, this analysis is somewhat deterministic and includes many assumptions. For this exercise I will rely on the following assumptions:

- Debt service remains within the town's draft debt policy of 8.5% of expenditures.
- Budget growth will range between 4-5%.
- Interest rates will average 4.1%.
- Municipal bonds will retain their tax-exempt status.
- The financing range includes the roof at the high school.
- The financing range is net of state reimbursements or asset sales.
- Debt service for large school projects will start in FY 2029 (excluding roof).

Based on these and other factors I estimate that the town may issue up to \$72-\$76 million in debt for these efforts.

Please note that the guidance is not intended to account for every possible situation and that changes in interest rates, construction costs and state aid may alter this range.

# School Construction Grants

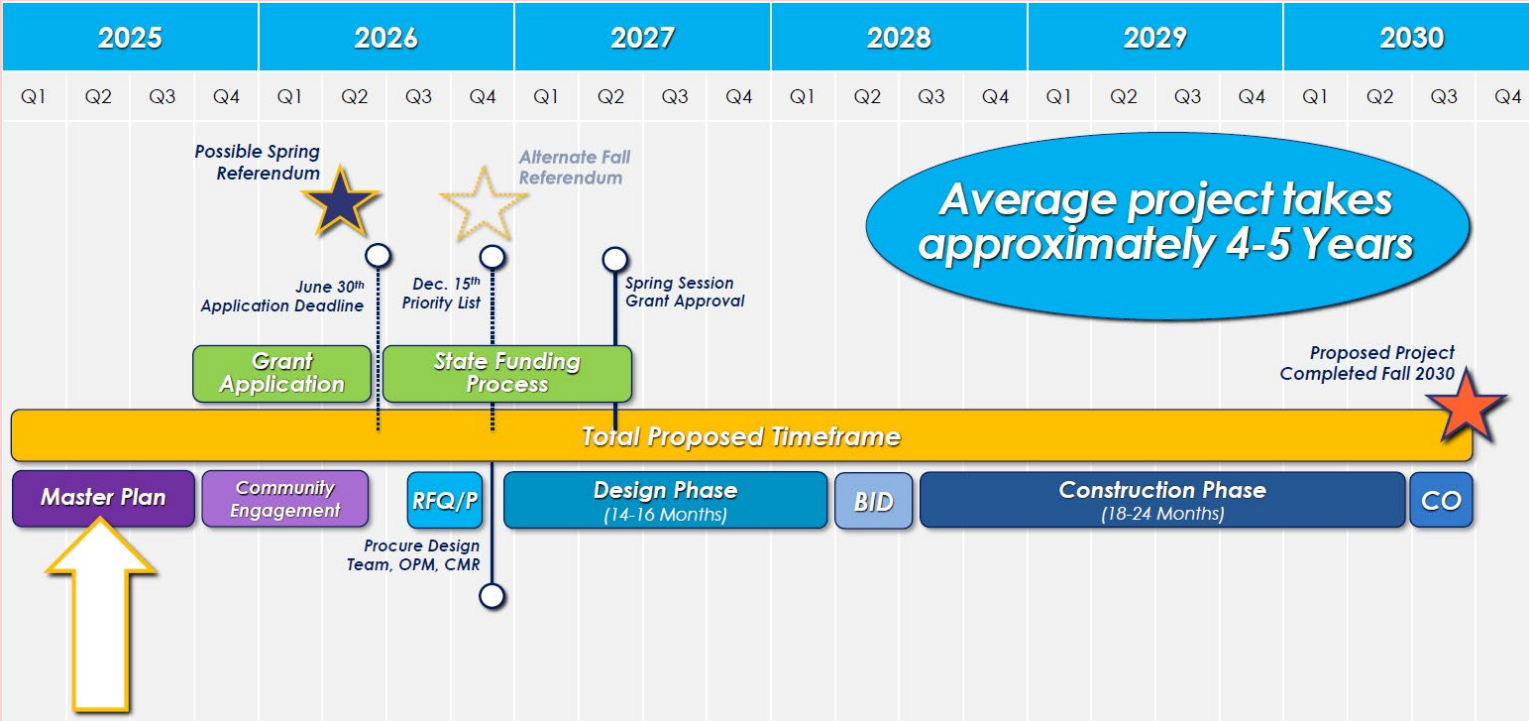
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- State's reimbursement program that helps districts pay for major school construction projects.
- Reimbursement rates vary by town, based on wealth
  - Branford is 24.64% new or 34.64% renovate as new.
- Not all costs are reimbursable
  - Site work, furniture, building sizing, and off-site infrastructure may be excluded.



# School Construction Grants

- Must submit project applications by June 30 each year to be considered for the following year's grant cycle.
- Projects require FULL local funding approval



# School Construction Grants

School	G.L.	Yr. Built (Reno)	Age	Current Enroll. ('24-'25) <small>Data from Enrollment Report provided by district dated March 3, 2025</small>	Exist. Building Area (OGA)	Allowable Area OGA	Delta	%
Branford High	9-12	1958 (1996)	67	751	279,879	136,911	142,968	96%
Francis Walsh Int.	5-8	2022* (RNV)	<del>3</del>	768	140,000	140,000	N/A	N/A
Mary T. Murphy	PK-4	1960 (1992)	65	324	51,917	40,578	11,339	28%
John B. Sliney	PK-4	1928 (1979)	97	254	50,766	31,811	18,955	60%
Mary R. Tisko Elem.	PK-4	1960 (1992)	65	33	15,687	N/A	7,921	18%
Indian Neck <i>(Original Structure)</i>	PK + Access	1955	70	35 (PK)	15,687	N/A	N/A	N/A

**73 Years Old!**

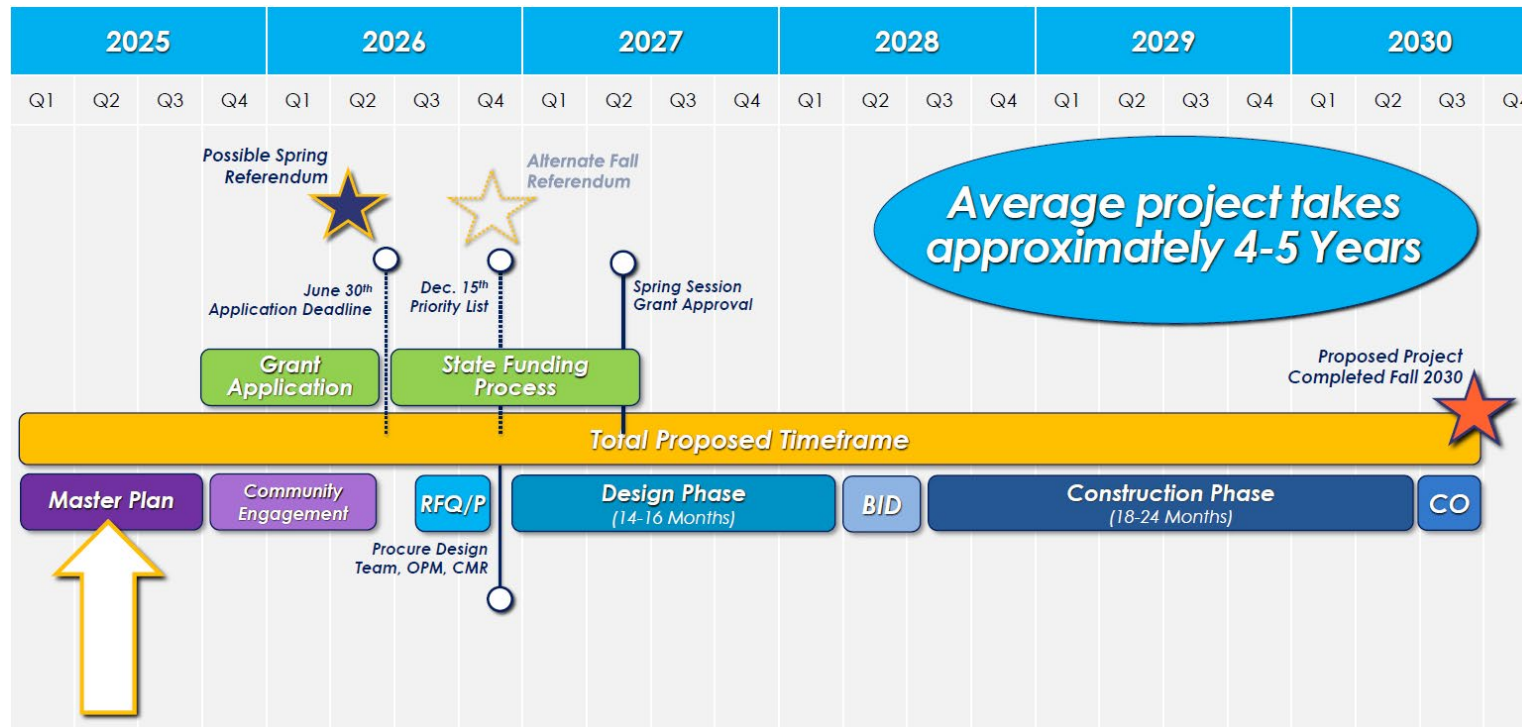
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**Built for a different purpose?**

# How to Start a Project

## *What is needed:*

- Capital appropriation for a project
- Establish building committee
- Required resolutions adopted by RTM



# How Does Financing Work?

Through adoption of Master Plan, start capital budget process



Request full appropriation



Special legislation and space standard waivers

## Total Project Costs

### Construction Costs

Sitework Escalation  
Building Phasing



80%



### Soft Costs

Furniture Technology  
Equipment Consultants



- SEATING IN THIS LOCATION IS INTENDED TO BE INVITING, FUN AND INTERACTIVE
- LIGHTWEIGHT AND EASILY MOVEABLE BY CHILDREN OF ALL AGES
- FURNITURE SOLUTIONS MAY VARY BASED ON SPECIAL LIMITATIONS



- MOBILE INSTRUCTION STATION
- MOBILE AND FLEXIBLE TEACHING STATION
- HEIGHT PNEUMATICALLY ADJUSTS

20%



# What is the Operating Budget Impact?

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- Increase in debt service cost



- \$1.3-\$3.5M in annual operating savings



- Reduce future capital obligations



- Sale of Town-owned asset



- Positive taxable property

# Community Survey – Two Options

*This survey asks for your feedback on the two preferred options currently being considered for the final Master Plan. Whether or not you participated in earlier conversations, your input now is critical as we move toward final decisions!*

Scan the code to get started

OR:

Visit this website

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BPSOptions>

