

Town Planning Goals Sub-Committee



***From Plowing
Yesterday's Fields***

***Planting Today's
Seed***

***To Harvesting
Tomorrow's Future***



Town of North Branford

Preliminary Report Town Planning Goals Sub-Committee September 2015

Members:

Town Council

Marie Diamond, Chairperson

Rose Angeloni

Daniel Armin

Vincent Caprio

Board of Education

Marcey Onofrio

Diane Vumback

Lou Paternoster, Alternate

With Special Thanks to

Michael T. Paulhus, Town Manager
Anthony Esposito, Finance Director

1. Identification of needs

During the first meeting on May 4, 2015, the committee reviewed current conditions in town to identify needs:

Town:

- ❖ Police Station – The police department is in dire need of renovation.
- ❖ Uniting the Town – Would a central campus that included the town hall, ambulance services, the police station, and the board of education's central office unite the town?
- ❖ Open space and town property – How to best utilize the Swajchuk/Augur/Mooney properties?
- ❖ Updating equipment - There is a need to update equipment in Public Works and all public safety departments to meet current standards.
- ❖ Storage needs – It appears that almost all departments need more storage space.
- ❖ Marketing campaign – North Branford needs a marketing campaign to draw businesses into town and to attract visitors to town.
- ❖ Sewers – If we are going to entice businesses into town, we need more sewers, especially on Route 80.

Education:

- ❖ NBHS – The building was completed in 1964. We need to look at "Renovate as New" because with the new roof it wouldn't make sense to construct a new building. We currently don't get reimbursement for proposed projects, i.e.: bathrooms, asbestos abatement, unit ventilator replacement, storage facilities, locker rooms, kitchen upgrades, science lab upgrades, library-media center upgrades, etc., that could qualify with a "renovate as new" project.
- ❖ TVES – The building was completed in 1970. At some point, the need to replace the portables should be addressed.

2. The committee's vision for the town

The committee discussed what it sees as the needs of the town in developing a long-range plan and a mission statement. The following high leverage needs were identified:

- ❖ Centralize services
- ❖ Review of facilities, including fields
- ❖ Space and storage requirements

- ❖ Increase desirability of the town
- ❖ Dispose of unused buildings – this may include former Senior Center & Augur House (historical registry??)
- ❖ Develop a plan before the next budget season

3. Mission Statement

“To develop a long-term plan for municipal and educational facilities and amenities that serves our community efficiently and effectively.”

4. Committee Meetings

The committee has met ten times. During many of those meetings the committee members met with all department heads to discuss their current office, meeting, and storage needs. The committee developed a needs assessment survey that was distributed to all department heads. A compilation of that survey is attached to this report. Also, on June 23, 2015 the committee met with State Representative, Vincent Candelora and State Senator, Ted Kennedy, Jr. Members reviewed what had transpired in the process to date and what the committee’s objectives are. Members asked Vincent Candelora and Ted Kennedy, Jr. how they could help the Town obtain the maximum amount of funding for all of our building projects. They offered their support if we begin work on any of the identified projects.

(The minutes from all of our meetings are available upon request.)

5. Budget Implications in the Future

The committee believes the department surveys need to be reviewed when making future budget decisions. We should develop a plan to meet some of the immediate needs as identified by the department leaders.

6. Timeframe for Projects

The committee discussed possible timeframes for various stages of capital projects after a review of current conditions and needs for facilities; the goal to centralize services; and the impact and schedule of the town’s debt service.

- ❖ North Branford High School - Renovate as New project – 2017-18 start date
- ❖ Police/Ambulance/Emergency Center building – possibly same time as North Branford High School
- ❖ Centralized Town Hall/Board of Education offices – mid 2020’s

7. Current Facilities and Sewer System

7.1 Town Departments

Meetings with department leaders resulted in a significant consensus of identified needs. The office arrangement is not efficient, particularly in terms of public ability to access information. The lack of storage space and locked vaults/file cabinets exists in most areas. There is also a shortage of meeting or conference areas for individual departments, cross-department communication, and interaction with the public. In addition it was suggested that the town consolidate storage for all supporting products, i.e. office supplies. This would enable the town departments to develop inventory control, share cost savings, and manage the order and reorder process more effectively and efficiently. (See Attachments A and B)

7.2 Town Hall

The existing town hall is not situated in a central location and is also inefficient in both layout and utilities. Centralized municipal facilities on the Swajchuk/Augur property would give a sense of cohesiveness to Northford and North Branford. The committee realizes that a study relative to a sewer system and water supply would have to be conducted and perhaps a change in that area's probable designation as a "green" area. We would need assistance from our state representative and senator. However, a central location for town, education, and emergency facilities would be prudent in terms of providing services to all residents. It could also serve as a gathering place with a gazebo for events and recreation. If the town considered selling the current town hall in order to develop a municipal center, it would be prime real estate, particularly its location, which is at the intersection of two state highways.

7.3 Public Works

Even though the size and nature of the Public Works differs from other departments, the perspective of Public Works is indicative of needs delineated by other departments. There is a lack of space for the storage and service of vehicles and equipment as well as supporting products. There is a need for file cabinets, furniture, partitions, and updated equipment. The problem of lack of space, storage, and meeting areas exists in many departments.

7.4 Police Station

The Police Station should be the first building considered for replacement. The current police station was originally built in the early 70s with an addition and some remodeling completed in the early 90s. A new police station would probably cost ten to twelve million dollars. Old Saybrook (town with similar size police department) completed a new police station in the spring of 2015 for ten million.

Some of the areas of the police station that need to be addressed:

1. **Squad Room** – This undersized area is currently used for multiple purposes such as shift change, roll call, report writing, meal breaks, and follow-up investigations. Roll call and shift changes should be conducted in a more formal, isolated setting so that information can be passed on to incoming shifts by the previous shifts and shift supervisors can address the oncoming officers and offer critical information prior to going on the road. Follow-up investigations should be conducted in a quiet and isolated area.
2. **Office Space and general storage** – Building size limitations do not allow for adequate desk space for sergeants and detectives. The current property room has issues in regards to its size and ability to provide proper storage for equipment. Proper gun storage lockers and individual bins used to keep evidence would allow for more efficiency and management. There is also ground water seeping up through the floor tiles making the floor area off limits for storing larger items.
3. **Locker Room and Shower Facilities**-The current locker room is undersized and inadequate for the needs of officers. The lockers are small and narrow and undersized for the equipment and uniform storage needs. There are an insufficient number of lockers to accommodate the number of officers in the department.
4. **Sally Port** – The single space sally port is difficult to use as this area has become a storage area for larger items. Since the sally port is not a drive-through, officers must back out among a large number of parked vehicles.
5. **Radio/Server Room** – This area of the building has been updated and all items are now on racks. However, climate control is an issue because the equipment in the room generates a tremendous amount of heat. Existing cooling generated by the main building is not adequate even with the addition of a window a/c unit. A third wall-mounted unit was added in order to keep the area at a temperature that is within equipment guidelines and there are currently three separate a/c systems that are in use to cool this area. However, none of these upgrades have sufficiently improved the climate control and there is limited space to add any future upgrades.
6. **911 Room and Dispatch Center** - The room which houses all of the 911 equipment has issues that are similar to that of the radio/server room in terms of limited space and cooling. This area is currently cooled by the existing building a/c system as well as a wall-mounted unit. This area contains equipment installed and maintained by the State of Connecticut and North Branford must conform to the state requirement. The recent addition, as well as future 911 equipment, will put a strain on the space limitations as well as the effective cooling of that area. Some dispatch center upgrades are scheduled to take place, but a larger, more detailed reorganization is needed. This upgrade should include bathroom access within the dispatch center.

7.5 North Branford High School Facility Concerns

North Branford High School was built in 1964 with an addition/renovation to the building in 1972. A facility study performed in 2002 by Moser, Pilon and Nelson Architects and a NESDEC study in 2010 reported the following areas of concern:

Exterior:

- ❖ A new focal front entrance is needed and the building is not fully ADA compliant.
- ❖ There is congestion during the pick-up and drop-off time periods.
- ❖ Parking is inadequate during the school day and during events.
- ❖ Field space was also found to be inadequate.

Interior/Structural/Mechanical:

- ❖ Structural issues were found based on age and movement in the masonry exterior walls.
- ❖ Abatement of asbestos tile is needed throughout the building.
- ❖ Renovation of 12 bathrooms throughout the building would be necessary to meet code compliance/life safety and accessibility.
- ❖ Upgrade heating system, install adequate controls, and eliminate direct steam loop in the gymnasium.
- ❖ There are building issues related to extended useful life and energy efficiency.
**Please reference details regarding energy efficiency and sustainability under 21st*
- ❖ Full-building air conditioning to support year-round facility use to provide an appropriate environment for increased technology hardware throughout the facility is recommended.
- ❖ No loading dock is available for delivery of supplies and equipment.

Interior – Classrooms, Offices, and Services:

- ❖ Classroom spaces are generally undersized and do not provide educational areas appropriate for the current curriculum nor allow for changes driven by curriculum evolution or technology. **Please reference details under 21st Century Learning Environment.*
- ❖ Classrooms do not contain adequate storage for materials.

- ❖ Renovate and upgrade locker rooms.
- ❖ Guidance space is limited and does not provide for full guidance services.
- ❖ Nurse's office is antiquated and not in proximity to the main office.
- ❖ Separate, designated spaces are needed for English Language Learners (ELL) and Occupational and Physical (OT/PT) services in a more centralized location.
- ❖ Cafeteria storage space is inadequate.

North Branford High School: Planning for a 21st Century Learning Environment

A 21st century learning facility is designed for flexibility to promote social interactions, inspire intellectual curiosity, and share best practices. It creates learning practices and physical environments that will support the teaching and learning of 21st century skills. Some major considerations in moving forward with a 21st century school facility are energy efficiency, sustainability, and building a structure that is designed to endure. Materials used would be durable and easy to clean. High efficiency lighting, including LED lighting and sensors in classrooms to minimize artificial light, in addition to air quality and temperature control have a proven positive effect on learning and will pay for themselves through long-term resource efficiency.

A 21st century learning environment would accommodate "learning suites" allowing a variety of activities to be performed at the same time. Spaces could be easily manipulated either with furniture or movable displays, providing space for both active and reflective learning. Spaces would be large enough for a large group of students with the ability to break into smaller groups (or SLC's – Small Learning Communities). This type of space also would accommodate different learning styles and different-sized groups as well as allowing students to work on projects in groups. This type of learning environment would allow teachers to maneuver around a classroom and teach from all angles.

A 21st century learning environment would also include areas for project-based learning and areas that are designed to support a range of activities including collaborative use of technology, presentation, social interactions and project areas.

7.6 Town's Sewer Infrastructure

One obstacle of potential commercial development in North Branford is the lack of sewers in areas designated as commercial or light industrial use. The committee discussed this issue with State Representative Candelora and State Senator Kennedy in regards to what help the state could provide in funding sewer expansion. Representative Candelora referred us to the State Plan of Conservation and Development and how the Town's plan is directly impacted by the State's plan. There are limited areas that would qualify for sewer expansion,

specifically sections of Route 80 from Fowler Road to the Guilford line and also a section of Clintonville Road near the Northford Ice Pavilion.

The committee also discussed the expansion of sewers on Rt. 80 from Totoket Road to the East Haven town line. A major stumbling block is this area is designated as a Preservation Area on the State Plan of Conservation and Development. This was done to protect the water quality of the Farm River as a source of drinking water. The commercial properties currently in this zone contain on-site wastewater disposal systems that are probably inconsistent with contemporary standards which lead to infiltration of untreated wastewater into the Farm River. The storm-water drainage systems are also decades old and discharge untreated storm water directly into the Farm River which would have to be brought up to contemporary standards. The Town would have to petition the State Office of Policy and Management to change the designation of this area from Preservation Area to Growth Area. If this is granted, this section would be eligible for grants to install sewers. This area would likely need to install a pump station and increases in capacity.

The committee discussed the possibility of installing sewers along Rt. 22 to the Swajchuk property so we could possibly develop a Town Campus there. Due to the zoning of the property along Rt. 22 to the Rt. 80 intersection and the length of sewer line, the cost would be prohibitive and it would not entice commercial development in that area. This does not mean we can't continue to explore the idea of a Town Campus on the Swajchuk property but we would have to consider a septic system.

We asked Town Engineer, Kurt Weiss, to estimate the cost of sewers from Fowler Road to the Guilford line as there are a number of potential commercial sites in this area that would benefit from sewers. The estimate given to us was \$5 million which we would also be able to apply for a STEAP grant to help fund some of this cost. We are also looking into the feasibility of doing this project in phases so we can apply for multiple STEAP grants. This also raised the issue of whether sewers would really increase the commercial development of this area.

(See Attachment C for the current Utilities Map included in the Plan of Conservation and Development)

8. Debt Impact and Proposed Bond Issues

From: *Independent Bond & Investment Consultants LLC*

Existing Debt Service:

- ❖ FY 2015-16 budgeted debt service is approximately \$5,515,000.
- ❖ Debt service will decline in FY 2017-18 to \$3,799,000 and will continue to decline thereafter.
- ❖ Debt service will decline significantly in FY 2017-18 (~\$1.7M), and again in FY 2025-26 (~\$1.5M).
- ❖ All current debt will be retired in 13 years (FY 2027-28).

The Town can take advantage of the drops in debt service when structuring future bond issues.

Proposed Projects:

- ❖ \$5,000,000 – Various Capital (mainly road improvements approved for 2015-16 budget year)
- ❖ \$12,000,000 – Police Facility
- ❖ \$5,000,000 – Sewer Line Extension
- ❖ \$55,000,000 (Gross) – High School Renovation

Scenario A – 50% State Reimbursement - \$27,500,000 (Net)

Scenario B – 40% State Reimbursement - \$33,000,000 (Net)

(See Attachment D for more information)

9. Next Steps in the Process

Based on the debt service information provided in # 8, debt service will decline in 2017-2018. If there is a consensus of the Town Council to consider a new Police Station and/or a “Renovate as New” High School, we need to begin the planning now for possible projects in 2017-2018. For planning purposes at this time, the Board of Education could use the funding allocated for renovating the high school bathrooms to begin educational specifications. We would seek the assistance of our town representative and senator with reimbursement qualifications. In terms of the Police Station, there is money in the capital improvement funding to hire a design engineer for the police station. The Police Station would be the first step in building a centralized municipal center. A centralized town facility (town, education, and emergency services) could be scheduled for some time between 2025-2026.

10. Attachments

- Attachment A: Copy of survey distributed to department heads
- Attachment B: Summary of survey results
- Attachment C: Town Utilities Map
- Attachment D: Debt Impact – Proposed Bond Issues



Department Needs Survey

Date:

- 1. Additional/New Operating Space:** Please think about how reconfigured or new operating space would make production in your department more efficient (i.e. office space, locker rooms, break room, sleeping quarters, fields, etc)
- 2. Equipment/Furniture Needed:** Please list equipment that will improve service in your department (i.e. office furniture, file cabinets, vehicle, exercise equipment, sports equipment, printer, desks, bleachers, etc.)



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3. Storage

Type of storage: Please describe the type of storage you need filing, equipment, vehicle, etc. and specific needs for that storage (i.e. temperature controlled, size standard filing cabinets, legal sized file cabinets, map storage in lateral files, map storage rolled up, etc.)

-
4. **Access to the public:** Please describe any layout or features that would make your department more welcoming to the public and provide an ease for conducting business (i.e. large counter space, visible departments, proper signage, etc.)

5. **Meeting space:** Please describe your departments needs for meeting space (i.e. public meetings, interdepartmental meetings or conferences, exercise space, etc)



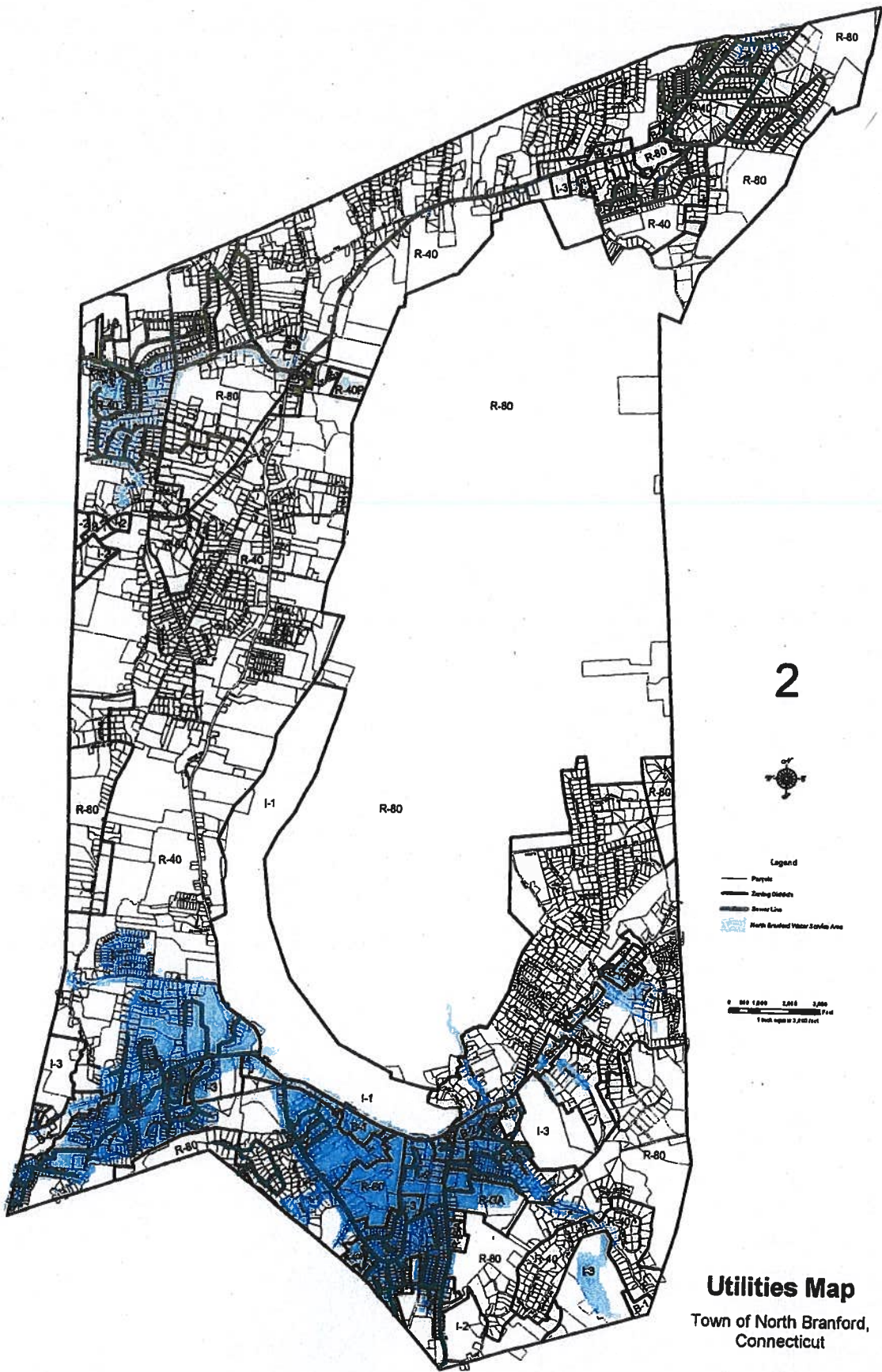
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6. **Sketch:** If you are able to sketch out a reconfigured working space please do so below.

North Branford
Results of Department Head Surveys re Needs

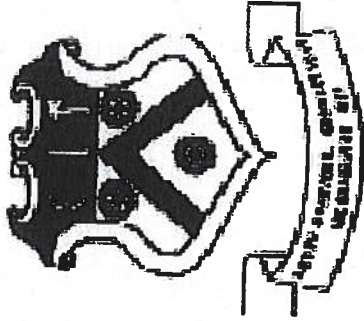
Attachment B

	Assess.	Build.	Engin.	Finance	Lib.	Park/Rec	Plan/Zon	Police	Pub.wks	Purch	Soc.Ser.	Tax	T.Clerk	T.Mang
More /indiv officespace				X					X	X				
Partition/s	X								X	X				
Chairs for public											X			
Furniture/desks/tables		X					X							
Cabinet Space in Off							X		X			X	X	
Counter Space												X		X
Waiting area	X	X												
File Cabinets			X	X										
Storage/shelving	X	X	X			X	X		X	X		X		X
Vault				X					X	X	X			X
Computers/printers	X				X							X	X	
Work Stations/off/pub	X													
Table/s														
Meet Space/Conf Rm		X		X			X			X	X			
Seating Area in lobby						X								
Signage						X								
Larger locker room								X		X			X	
Roll call room						X		X						
Squad room								X						
Exercise room								X						
Security System								X						
Reconfigure office											X			
Training areas													X	X
Replace main building									X					
New bathrms/shower									X					
Hand tool storage									X					
Storage fls/ceiling wk									X					
Drivers' room									X					
Sign storage /wk area														
Recreation vehicl						X								
Update equipment						X								
Wrk on fields						X			X					



Utilities Map
Town of North Branford,
Connecticut





Debt Impact – Proposed Bond Issues



Independent Bond & Investment Consultants LLC

Existing Debt Service

- ▶ FY 2015-16 budgeted debt service is approximately \$5,515,000.
- ▶ Debt service will decline in FY 2017-18 to \$3,799,000 and will continue to decline thereafter.
- ▶ Debt service will decline significantly in FY 2017-18 (~\$1.7M), and again in FY 2025-26 (~\$1.5M).
- ▶ All current debt will be retire in 13 years (FY 2027-28).
- ▶ The Town can take advantage of the drops in debt service when structuring future bond issues.

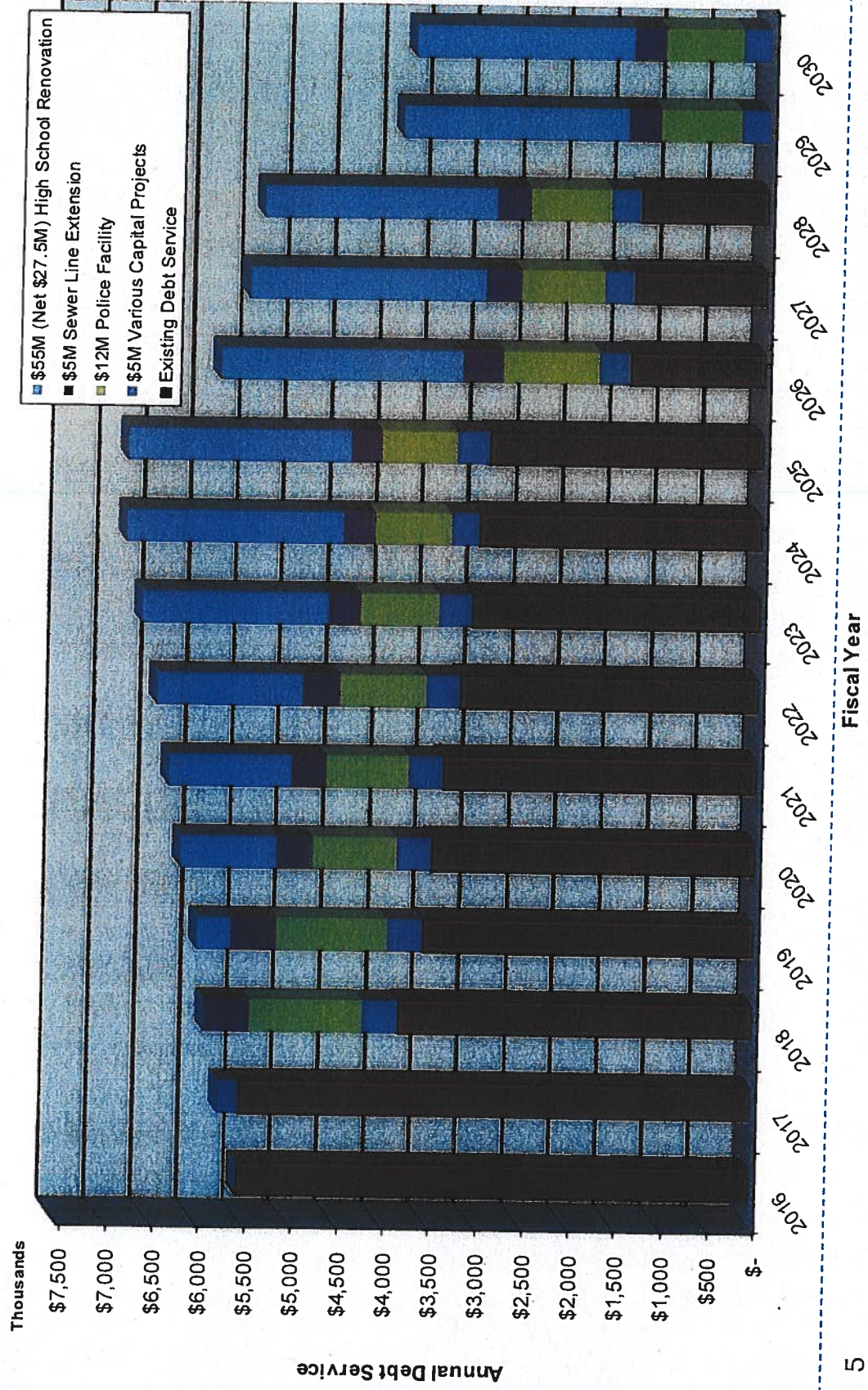
Proposed Projects

- ▶ \$5,000,000 – Various Capital
- ▶ \$12,000,000 – Police Facility
- ▶ \$5,000,000 – Sewer Line Extension
- ▶ \$55,000,00 (Gross) – High School Renovation
 - ▶ Scenario A – 50% State Reimbursement - \$27,500,000 (Net)
 - ▶ Scenario B – 40% State Reimbursement - \$33,000,000 (Net)

Debt Impact – Scenario A

FISCAL YEAR	EXISTING DEBT SERVICE	PROPOSED DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL ESTIMATED DEBT SERVICE	CHANGE IN DEBT SERVICE	FY
2015-16	\$ 5,515,038	\$ -	\$ 5,515,038		2016
2016-17	5,505,194	225,000	5,730,194	215,155	2017
2017-18	3,799,063	2,102,250	5,901,313	171,119	2018
2018-19	3,547,719	2,438,500	5,986,219	84,906	2019
2019-20	3,466,681	2,714,750	6,181,431	195,213	2020
2020-21	3,359,956	2,963,625	6,323,581	142,150	2021
2021-22	3,191,669	3,278,969	6,470,638	147,056	2022
2022-23	3,083,144	3,565,344	6,648,488	177,850	2023
2023-24	3,022,244	3,807,344	6,829,588	181,100	2024
2024-25	2,939,838	3,889,844	6,829,681	94	2025
2025-26	1,439,631	4,407,625	5,847,256	(982,425)	2026
2026-27	1,409,034	4,139,500	5,548,534	(298,722)	2027
2027-28	1,357,331	4,048,406	5,405,738	(142,797)	2028
2028-29		3,931,719	3,931,719	(1,474,019)	2029
2029-30		3,815,031	3,815,031	(116,688)	2030
2030-31		3,748,344	3,748,344	(66,688)	2031
2031-32		3,681,656	3,681,656	(66,688)	2032
2032-33		3,564,969	3,564,969	(116,688)	2033
2033-34		3,447,094	3,447,094	(117,875)	2034
2034-35		3,401,844	3,401,844	(45,250)	2035
2035-36		3,280,406	3,280,406	(121,438)	2036
2036-37		2,863,094	2,863,094	(417,313)	2037
2037-38		1,867,313	1,867,313	(995,781)	2038
2038-39		1,788,938	1,788,938	(78,375)	2039
2039-40		1,417,688	1,417,688	(371,250)	2040
2040-41		767,813	767,813	(649,875)	2041
TOTAL	\$ 41,636,542	\$ 75,157,063	\$ 116,793,604		

Debt Impact Chart – Scenario A



Debt Impact – Scenario B

FISCAL YEAR	EXISTING DEBT SERVICE	PROPOSED DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL ESTIMATED DEBT SERVICE	CHANGE IN DEBT SERVICE	FY
2015-16	\$ 5,515,038	\$ -	\$ 5,515,038		2016
2016-17	5,505,194	225,000	5,730,194	215,155	2017
2017-18	3,799,063	2,102,250	5,901,313	171,119	2018
2018-19	3,547,719	2,463,500	6,011,219	109,906	2019
2019-20	3,466,681	2,852,250	6,318,931	307,713	2020
2020-21	3,359,956	3,231,750	6,591,706	272,775	2021
2021-22	3,191,669	3,540,219	6,731,888	140,181	2022
2022-23	3,083,144	3,826,594	6,909,738	177,850	2023
2023-24	3,022,244	4,263,844	7,286,088	376,350	2024
2024-25	2,939,838	4,309,469	7,249,306	(36,781)	2025
2025-26	1,439,631	4,913,594	6,353,225	(896,081)	2026
2026-27	1,409,034	4,583,594	5,992,628	(360,597)	2027
2027-28	1,357,331	4,555,031	5,912,363	(80,266)	2028
2028-29		4,472,906	4,472,906	(1,439,456)	2029
2029-30		4,389,594	4,389,594	(83,313)	2030
2030-31		4,256,281	4,256,281	(133,313)	2031
2031-32		4,197,969	4,197,969	(58,313)	2032
2032-33		4,064,656	4,064,656	(133,313)	2033
2033-34		3,930,156	3,930,156	(134,500)	2034
2034-35		3,794,469	3,794,469	(135,688)	2035
2035-36		3,658,781	3,658,781	(135,688)	2036
2036-37		3,227,219	3,227,219	(431,563)	2037
2037-38		2,217,188	2,217,188	(1,010,031)	2038
2038-39		2,124,563	2,124,563	(92,625)	2039
2039-40		1,739,063	1,739,063	(385,500)	2040
2040-41		1,074,938	1,074,938	(664,125)	2041
TOTAL	\$ 41,636,542	\$ 84,014,875	\$ 125,651,417		

Debt Impact Chart – Scenario B

