



TOWN OF MANSFIELD

Proposed School Building Project

What is the "School Building Project?"

Since 2005, members of the Mansfield Board of Education and the Mansfield Town Council have extensively reviewed, analyzed and discussed various options for either renovating and/or constructing new schools in Mansfield. The three current elementary schools were constructed in 1956 (Vinton) and 1957 (Goodwin, Southeast). Our elementary schools are approximately 55 years old and have not had major renovations since 1990-1991. The Mansfield Middle School was constructed in 1969 and has not had major renovations since 1998-1999. The existing schools have critical needs.

What is being preliminary recommended for the School Building Project?

After careful review and consideration, the Town Council at their February 21, 2012 special meeting selected a preliminary recommendation to build two new elementary schools, each housing 375 students. The new elementary schools would be located on two of three possible sites: existing Vinton site; existing Southeast site; or parcels adjacent to the existing Goodwin site. Site selection from the three locations would be determined prior to the referendum. It is anticipated that construction on the two elementary schools would be completed and open for September 2015. It is also being recommended that the Mansfield Middle School be renovated, with improvements being completed by September 2016.

What are some of the advantages to the preliminary recommendation?

New construction promotes sustainability and efficient use of resources. Modern and efficient energy management systems will reduce energy costs. Students will have access to state of the art library and media centers. Classroom size will be more uniform and students will have enhanced instructional programs. Teachers will have improved ability to collaborate and staff specialists will be shared more easily and equitably. Portable classrooms currently in use will be replaced with permanent construction.

How much will the School Building Project cost and how will it impact my taxes?

Preliminary estimates for the construction of two new elementary schools is \$52,618,688. The state would reimburse Mansfield for 45% of the cost, bringing Mansfield's share of construction costs for the elementary schools to **\$29,015,271**. Projected annual operational savings by reducing the number of elementary schools from three to two is \$865,000. Renovations to the Middle School are estimated at \$11,180,299. For renovations, the state reimbursement rate is 21.5% which is less than if Mansfield was to "build to new." Mansfield's share of renovation costs for the Middle School is estimated at **\$5,857,906**. Mansfield's total estimated share for the new elementary schools and the Middle School renovations is **\$34,873,177**. It is important to note that until design and site selection is finalized, all estimates are preliminary. For a Mansfield taxpayer who owns a median valued single family home a sample tax impact of this project averages to \$391 per year, or a grand total of \$8,988 over the course of the debt service. Debt service would be paid off in 23 years.

What other options were considered?

Various other options were considered such as building one new elementary school, renovating/expanding two existing elementary schools, and renovating all three elementary schools (Option A scenarios). Option A scenarios, referred to as "baseline," "baseline plus solar panels," and "enhanced," range in scope. All Option A scenarios include roof replacements, energy improvements and other renovations. Enhanced Option A includes baseline renovations plus solar panels and media centers. Depending on the Option A scenario, the estimated cost to renovate all three existing elementary schools ranges from \$25,452,048 to \$35,517,211. The state reimbursement rate

Preliminary Recommendation Quick Facts:

- ✓ 2 new elementary schools would replace the existing 3 elementary schools, opening in September 2015. The current schools are 55 years old.
- ✓ New elementary schools would be located on two of the following sites: existing Vinton site; existing Southeast site; or parcels adjacent to the existing Goodwin site.
- ✓ Mansfield Middle School would be renovated, completed in September 2016.
- ✓ Preliminary total costs to Mansfield taxpayers is estimated at **\$34,873,177**.

What other options were considered, Cont'd?

would be between 19.8% and 21.5% depending on the scenario selected, or \$5,110,153 to \$7,042,110. The cost to Mansfield taxpayers for Option A would be \$20,341,895 to \$28,475,101 depending on the selected scenario. For a Mansfield taxpayer who owns a median valued single family home a sample tax impact of Option A scenarios averages \$236-\$326 per year, or a grand total of \$5,426-\$7,492 over the course of the 23 year debt service.

In March 2010 the School Building Committee recommended constructing one new elementary school to the Mansfield Board of Education. Based on input from the community, the Mansfield Board of Education recommended two new elementary schools in its report. After its own review, the Town Council has discontinued its consideration of the single elementary school option. Information on these various options can be obtained at the Town's website, www.mansfieldct.gov.

How can I comment on the proposed project?

Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed project at **7:00pm on Monday, March 5, 2012** in the Mansfield Middle School Auditorium, 205 Spring Hill Road, Mansfield. Citizens wishing to comment may provide feedback, opinions, and ask questions about the project. Members of the public asking questions of fact related to the project will be answered in the weeks following the meeting; responses will be posted to the Town's website. Additional ways to communicate with Council are provided below.

What are the next steps?

Following the public hearing, the Town Council plans to finalize a recommendation for the School Building Project and submit the proposal to voters at a referendum in May 2012. The advantage to holding a May 2012 referendum versus a November 2012 referendum is that the construction project can get underway sooner, saving an estimated one million dollars. All cost estimates in this publication assume a May 2012 referendum date.

INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECIPIENT

Town of Mansfield
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, CT 06268



Opportunities to Let Your Voice be Heard

Public Hearing, 7pm, March 5th, 2012,
Mansfield Middle School Auditorium, 205 Spring Hill Road

Public Comment, Town Council Meetings, 7:30pm, 2nd & 4th Mondays of Every Month,
Council Chambers, 4 South Eagleville Road

Comments can be submitted in writing to Council members:

Via email at TownCouncil@mansfieldct.org

Hard copy in c/o of the Town Manager's Office, 4 South Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT 06268