

District: City of Gardner
 School Name: Waterford Street Elementary School
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic
 Date: February 6, 2019

Recommendation

That the Executive Director be authorized to approve the City of Gardner (the “District”), as part of its Invitation to Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Waterford Street Elementary School and the existing Elm Street Elementary School with a new PK-4 facility to be located on the Pearl Street site. MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District’s Preferred Schematic.

District Information	
District Name	City of Gardner
Elementary School(s)	Waterford Street Elementary School (PK-1) Elm Street Elementary School (2-4)
Middle School(s)	Gardner Middle School (5-7)
High School(s)	Gardner High School (8-12) Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology (9-12)
Priority School Name	Waterford Street Elementary School
Type of School	Elementary School
Grades Served	PK-1
Year Opened	1950
Existing Square Footage	66,811
Additions	N/A
Acreage of Site	12.2 acres
Building Issues	The District identified deficiencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Structural integrity – Mechanical systems – Electrical systems – Plumbing systems – Accessibility
Original Design Capacity	Unknown
2017-2018 Enrollment	468
Agreed Upon Enrollment	Study Enrollment includes the following configurations: 925 Students (K-4) (Preferred Schematic) 365 Students (K-1)
Enrollment Specifics	Contingent upon the Board’s approval of the Preferred Schematic, the District will sign a Design Enrollment Certification for 925 students in grades K-4, for a project that will serve grades PK-4.
Total Project Budget – Debt Exclusion Anticipated	Yes

MSBA Board Votes	
Invitation to Eligibility Period	February 15, 2017
Invitation to Feasibility Study	October 25, 2017

Preferred Schematic Authorization	On February 13, 2019 Board agenda
Project Scope & Budget Authorization	District is targeting Board authorization on August 28, 2019
Feasibility Study Reimbursement Rate (Incentive points are not applicable)	80.00%

Consultants	
Owner’s Project Manager (the “OPM”)	Colliers International
Designer	Jones Whitsett Associates, Inc.

Discussion

The existing Waterford Street Elementary School is a two-story 66,811 square foot cast-in-place facility, originally constructed in 1950 as a junior high school, and is located on approximately 12 acres of land. The existing Waterford Street facility currently houses students in grades PK-1.

The District identified numerous deficiencies in the Statement of Interest that are associated with the structural integrity, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as building accessibility. The District also identified deficiencies associated with the ability to deliver an educational program for elementary school students in spaces originally designed for upper grade populations.

As part of the Feasibility Study, the District explored options that included a consolidation alternative for the Waterford Street and Elm Street Elementary Schools for the District’s K-4 student population. This effort resulted in the following study design enrollments: 365 students for grades K-1 and 925 students for grades K-4, with both study enrollments incorporating a Pre-Kindergarten contingent.

The existing Elm Street Elementary School is a three-story 93,768 square foot facility originally constructed in 1926 as the Gardner High School and located on approximately 11.75 acres of land. The existing Elm Street facility currently houses students in grades 2-4.

In conjunction with its consultants, the District performed a comprehensive assessment of the existing conditions and educational programs for both the Waterford Street and Elm Street facilities. Accordingly, the District received input from educators, administrators, and facilities personnel. Based on the findings of this effort, the District and its consultants initially considered six preliminary options that included one base repair option, two addition/renovation configurations, and three new construction options as listed below.

Option	Description of Preliminary Options
1	Base repair of Waterford St. School – 365 students PK-1
2	Addition/renovation of Waterford St. School – 365 students PK-1
3	New construction of Waterford St. School – 365 students PK-1
4	Addition/renovation of Elm St. School – 925 students PK-4
5	New construction at Middle/High School site – 365 students PK-1
6	New construction at Middle/High School site – 925 students PK-4

As a result of this analysis, the District determined that “Option 1” does not meet the needs of the District’s educational program or address the primary concerns associated with an existing building originally designed to serve adolescent students. However, the District agreed to continue to include this option for cost comparison purposes only. Although many of the educational program goals could be addressed in “Option 2”, the District noted that this option would require undesirable phased construction and temporary modular units and does not meet the District’s desired PK-4 consolidated grade reconfiguration. Although “Option 3” and “Option 5” could meet the needs of the District’s educational program in new facilities, these options do not meet the District’s desired PK-4 consolidated grade reconfiguration.

Based on the MSBA’s review of the District’s options to be further evaluated, the MSBA encouraged the District to further consider at least one option consisting of a PK-1 grade configuration.

As a result of further consideration, MSBA staff and the District agreed to three final options for further development and consideration in the final evaluation and development of preliminary design pricing as presented below. As noted, “Option 1” Base Repair, is included for cost comparison purposes only.

Summary of Preliminary Design Pricing for Final Evaluation of Options

Option (Description)	Total Gross Square Feet	Square Feet of Renovated Space (cost*/sq. ft.)	Square Feet of New Construction (cost*/sq. ft.)	Site, Building Takedown, Haz Mat. Cost*	Estimated Total Construction ** (cost*/sq. ft.)	Estimated Total Project Costs
Option 1: (PK-1 Base Repair)	66,810	66,810 \$329/sq. ft.	972 \$390/sq. ft.	\$3,448,572	\$25,801,461 \$381/sq. ft.	\$33,540,000
Option 2: (PK-1 Addition/ renovation)	81,828	66,811 \$328/sq. ft.	15,017 \$390/sq. ft.	\$5,413,522	\$33,195,518 \$406/sq. ft.	\$43,150,000
Option 4: (PK-4 Addition/ renovation)	163,546	75,804 \$227/sq. ft.	87,742 \$390/sq. ft.	\$8,991,766	\$60,422,444 \$369/sq. ft.	\$78,550,000
Option 6: (PK-4 New construction)***	145,757	n/a	145,757 \$376/sq. ft.	\$10,486,767	\$65,252,045 \$448/sq. ft.	\$84,830,000

* Marked up construction costs

** Does not include construction contingency

***District’s Preferred Schematic

The District has selected “Option 6”, new construction, as the Preferred Schematic to proceed into Schematic Design. The District selected “Option 6” as its preferred option as it allows the District to consolidate grades PK-1 and grades 2-4 student population into a single PK-4 facility and replaces two aging facilities. In addition to the benefits associated with student/building

consolidation, it is anticipated that the proposed layout will provide appropriately-sized spaces and the desired flexibility in order for the District to efficiently deliver its educational program.

After further evaluation the District did not select “Option 2”, PK-1 addition/renovation because of the extensive work anticipated with the existing building, disruption during construction, and the inability to meet the District’s desired PK-4 grade configuration. Although “Option 4” would allow the District to consolidate grade PK-4, the District did not select it due to site constraints, anticipated traffic concerns, and disruption during construction.

The District presented its Preferred Schematic to the MSBA Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) on January 23, 2019. At that meeting, members of the FAS discussed: the location of the proposed building and its impact that clearing the area for the building and parking lots will have on drainage and potential flooding; reducing the number of transitions for students; incorporation of two sinks in each classroom; the number of kindergarten students per classroom; proposed staffing of media center areas; proposed technology use in the facility; the importance of professional development and teacher planning as it relates to the proposed changes to teaching methodology in a new facility; appreciation of the Educational Program and building layout; distribution of the Special Education spaces in the proposed facility; the Special Education programs within the school district; impact of site constraints and natural topography relative to proposed parking; incorporation of nature and potential for natural settings in the proposed play spaces and curriculum; incorporating the concept of the “school in the woods” as the design progresses; timeline associated with site acquisition/control and use of the site; consideration of the location of the kitchen; and consideration of the size and flexibility of cafeteria design for future use.

MSBA staff reviewed the conclusions of the Feasibility Study and all other subsequent submittals with the District and found:

- 1) MSBA staff recommendation for the Board’s approval of the District’s Preferred Schematic is conditional, contingent upon the District gaining full ownership, control, and exclusive use of the proposed site. The MSBA will not sign a Project Funding Agreement and will not reimburse the District for any costs incurred beyond the Feasibility Study Agreement without all land use issues being resolved.
- 2) The options investigated were sufficiently comprehensive in scope, the approach undertaken in this study was appropriate, and the District’s Preferred Schematic is reasonable and is reported to best meet the needs identified by the District.
- 3) The District has submitted an operational budget for educational objectives and a capital budget statement for MSBA review.
- 4) The District’s Schematic Design submittal will be subject to final review and approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as part of the Schematic Design submittal, which is prior to executing a Project Scope and Budget Agreement.
- 5) Subject to Board approval, the MSBA will participate in a project that includes spaces that meet MSBA guidelines, except for variations previously agreed to by the MSBA. All proposed spaces will be reviewed during the Schematic Design phase.

- 6) As part of the Schematic Design phase, the District will work with the MSBA to determine a mutually agreeable methodology to differentiate eligible costs from ineligible costs.

MSBA staff has reviewed the Feasibility Study and accepts the District's Preferred Schematic. Based on the review outlined above, staff recommends that the City of Gardner be approved to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Waterford Street Elementary School and the existing Elm Street Elementary School with a new PK-4 facility to be located on the Pearl Street site.