

EXETER FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Town Offices, 10 Front Street, Exeter NH 03833

January 15, 2021

Town of Exeter Select Board
Town Offices
10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833

Dear Members of the Select Board:

The Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) respectfully submits its recommendations regarding two proposed projects for the Fiscal Years (FY) 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The FAC asks that the Select Board consider and include these recommendations in the public record for the Town's Budget Hearing on January 19th, 2021.

By votes of 5-0, the FAC makes the following recommendations:

1. Public Safety Complex (PSC)

The FAC recommends that the Public Safety Complex proceed in two phases: first, completion of a feasibility study to ascertain a preferred option for new and/or renovated facilities; and second, the design and construction of the preferred option. The first phase would occur in FY2021; the second would begin in FY2022. The FAC anticipates that each phase would be presented to voters as warrant articles, although the first phase could be included in the FY2021 operating budget.

The feasibility study would be conducted by a selected design firm and would accomplish the following:

- Develop a building program of spaces needed by the fire and police departments.
- Evaluate existing facilities and identify potential sites for new facilities.
- Develop high-level conceptual plans for multiple building options (new construction, renovation of existing buildings, and any combination thereof).
- Provide robust opportunities for public input as we move from initial options to a final preferred option.
- Produce third-party cost estimates for conceptual options that can set a baseline for a project budget.

The FAC recommends allocating \$150,000 - \$200,000 for this phase of the project. The cost estimate for the feasibility study has been corroborated by Town Planner Dave Sharples. The scope of work for the study is clearly defined in Attachment A. The subsequent construction phase would include full design and construction of the new facility.

Initially there was discussion from the Town that the first phase would include schematic design documents of a selected site. The FAC's opinion is that this approach does not adequately evaluate all design options, nor does it allow for enough public input prior to moving to the construction phase. This could lead to a construction warrant article being defeated at the polls.

We advocate for the feasibility study approach as it will allow for a thorough review of all options, will generate a project budget for the next phase, and will allow ample time for public input prior to moving to the next phase. Overall, it should be a well-planned approach that can generate the public support necessary for a successful project. This is a typical approach for municipal building projects locally, regionally, and nationally.

The Budget Recommendations Committee (BRC), in their meeting from November 18, 2020, recommended \$100,000 for the first phase of this project. This assumes a pre-selected site where the existing combined facility at 20 Court Street is renovated to house only the fire department, while the police department would move to a new facility constructed on town land on Epping Road. While definitely a viable option, we cannot conclude this is the best option absent any study of alternate site and building options. We are also concerned that selecting a site and building option prior to soliciting community feedback may hurt public support for the project.

The BRC's intent may be to save time and money on site selection, but their preferred option may not be the most cost effective when compared to other options that will be developed during the feasibility study. We also assert their approach does not provide adequate review of all possible sites in light of the information in the **Fire Staffing and Deployment Analysis** report commissioned by the Town and completed in the summer of 2020. This report provides detailed data on areas of concentration for emergency calls and departmental response times. We should evaluate more locations in response to this information.

We recommend the evaluation of multiple sites to ensure the selected option best serves the town operationally and fiscally, while also allowing public input throughout the site selection process. The feasibility study should be a thorough, transparent process that can engender public collaboration and support for the project.

2. Department of Public Works (DPW) Garage

The FAC recommends no funding for this project in FY2021. The FAC met with the DPW this summer to tour the garage and discuss the DPW's needs. The FAC agrees with the DPW that the garage needs to be replaced; however, the DPW has yet to produce a detailed scope of work to justify the first phase of funding. There was discussion that ranged from new garage plans to a master plan for the DPW complex, but to date we have not seen any detailed proposals from the DPW or their design consultant that would justify the \$100,000 in funding requested.

In addition, the FAC has raised the issue that the construction cost of a new garage listed in the current CIP is outdated and does not reflect the larger concept developed by their design consultant. The FAC would like to see a detailed scope of design work and an updated construction estimate before recommending funding.

Thank you for considering these recommendations. We are available to answer any questions or receive any comments you may have.

Cordially,
Kris Weeks, Chair
Peter Lennon, Vice Chair
Rob Corson
Mark Leighton
Amanda Kelly

Attachments: (A) Public Safety Complex RFP Outline

ATTACHMENT (A):

RFP OUTLINE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX

Options A, B, C from CPSM (Center for Public Safety Management, Washington, DC) study as “roadmap” – some options may require land acquisition/evaluate feasibility of acquisition vs. option.

1) Program Review – Architect/CPSM (as proofers/study)

- a) Level of service determination
 - i) Police
 - ii) Fire, Health and Emergency Preparedness
- b) Staffing support
- c) Shared services - Dispatch

2) Site Evaluation

- a) Background
 - i) ASTM Phase I- Environmental
 - ii) Deed Research
 - iii) Boundary survey- Alta
 - iv) Geotech evaluation and borings (later)
 - v) Zoning Review - Dave
 - vi) Planning Review - Dave
 - vii) Infrastructure
 - (1) Water
 - (2) Sewer
 - (3) Power/Electric
 - (4) Tel/Com
 - viii) Hardness/ Resilience

3) Facility Options

- a) Program documentation (add sustainable features?)
- b) Existing conditions evaluation on current facility
- c) Feasibility Studies
 - i) Renovations/ Additions to existing facility
 - (1) Site Plan test fit
 - ii) New facility with combined services
 - (1) Site specific
 - (a) Site Plan test Fit
 - iii) New facility with separated program
 - (1) Site Specific
 - (a) Site Plan Test Fit

4) Preferred Alternative (to be presented with other options)

5) Community participation assistance

- a) Attend two community information events/Master Plan/website for project, etc.

6) Independent Cost Estimate including a range of costs

7) Deliverables

- a) Site Evaluation- Report
- b) Site and Building Program
- c) Facility Options
 - i) Site Plan (digital and presentation boards)
 - ii) Building Plans (digital and presentation boards)
 - iii) Overall concept renderings (digital and presentation boards)

- iv) Design Narratives by construction Division
- v) Independent Cost Estimate
- vi) Sustainability analysis
 - (1) Site
 - (2) Facility