



November 3, 2020

Dear Horace Mann Community,

We would like to provide a detailed follow up to the recently released FY22-FY26 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the City of Newton, which includes projects for the Horace Mann School. We hope that the following timeline and explanation helps clarify the CIP and project planning process, and addresses some of the concerns expressed by members of the Horace Mann Community.

The CIP is a living document. It is reviewed and updated every six months, typically in October and April of each year. Projects can move up and down in priority as new information is integrated into the overall Citywide 5-year plan, based on newly identified needs (or urgency), funding availability and other factors, including projects moving off the list once they are completed. The methodology for prioritizing projects is described in the [FY22-FY26 Capital Improvement Plan](#) appendix, which can be found beginning on page 201 of the CIP document.

The timeline below lists Horace Mann CIP projects over the past two years. (Please note that the City's Fiscal Year (FY) is from July 1 – June 30.)

October 15, 2018 - FY20-FY24 CIP

#37 – Carr School Air Conditioning – \$500,000 – Funding to be requested in FY19.
Install air conditioning system into school before Horace Mann moves in.

April 16, 2019 - FY20-FY24 Supplemental CIP

#20 – Carr School Air Conditioning - \$500,000 – Funding previously approved in FY19.
Install air conditioning system into school before Horace Mann moves in. Project completed and removed from FY21-FY25 CIP.

October 21, 2019 - FY21-FY25 CIP

#33 - Horace Mann School Improvements – Cost TBD – Funding not specified in FY21-FY25.
Install sinks in second floor classrooms, make improvements to playground, and other school upgrades.

May 11, 2020 - FY21-FY25 Supplemental CIP

#75 – Horace Mann School Improvements - \$500,000 – Funding of \$150,000 approved for sinks and other improvements with work to be completed prior to Fall 2020; playground improvements postponed due to COVID-19.

May 11, 2020 – Due to COVID's impact on City finances, all School projects were put on HOLD except the Oak Hill Classroom Addition and Horace Mann sinks and interior wall moves to enlarge classrooms.



October 19, 2020 - FY22-FY26 CIP

#78 – Horace Mann School Playground Improvements - \$150,000 – Funding and project completion not specified in FY22-FY26. Make improvements to playground facilities.

#108 – Horace Mann Classroom Addition & Improvement – Cost TBD – Funding and project completion not specified in FY22-FY26. Horace Mann School facilities upgrades.

As you can see above, the “Horace Mann School Improvements” project that was listed at priority #33 in the FY21-FY25 CIP was the “short term” project for sinks, interior upgrades and playground improvements that we planned to address by the fall of 2020. However, due to COVID-19, funding continued for the sinks and some interior wall moves, while playground improvements were postponed. In the FY21 Supplemental CIP, this project priority for playground improvements was shifted to #75.

In November of 2019, separately, outside of the CIP, NPS funded hiring an architect to do a feasibility study to assess the existing building conditions and current space use, to identify opportunities to optimize existing space utilization, and to define the scope of any proposed improvements in a possible larger future project. The initial work on the project was performed by Raymond Design Associates (RDA), using guidance from the three recently completed elementary schools and the Lincoln-Eliot project that was in design at the time. This “longer term” project was not yet in the City’s CIP when we began the feasibility study. NPS committed to advocating for the project to be added to the Capital Improvement Plan in the next annual update. This was accomplished in the FY22-FY26 CIP that was released on October 19, 2020. This longer term project was also put on hold due to COVID-19.

Prior to putting the longer term project on hold, as part of the feasibility study, the architect, RDA, documented existing space utilization, completed the programmatic and spatial assessment and, in collaboration with the working group, developed a space program that aligns with both Newton’s Educational Plan and MSBA space guidelines. From this information and additional meetings with the working group, RDA developed a preliminary conceptual long term plan that includes a classroom addition and interior modifications to meet the space program. The “Horace Mann Classroom Addition & Improvement” project that was added to the FY22-FY26 CIP is the result of this work. Materials documenting this work will be posted on the NPS website in the next few weeks. Typically a project would continue into schematic design before establishing an estimated cost. Given that the project was at preliminary conceptual design, timing of the project was uncertain, and enrollment numbers will need to be reconfirmed whenever the project is restarted, a cost estimate has not yet been included in the CIP.

The NPS team gave input to the CIP Committee on the priority ranking of this project relative to other school CIP projects. The CIP Committee then used the process described in the CIP appendix referenced above, which considers the current building conditions, the risk of failure and the impact of failure, as well as other factors. Placed as the #108 priority, it follows other important School projects:

- #13: Oak Hill Middle School Space Solution
- #14: Newton Early Childhood Program
- #32: NNHS Pool Air Handling Unit
- #33: HVAC/Boilers at various schools
- #38: 150 Jackson Road – Replace Boiler
- #42: Lincoln-Eliot at 150 Jackson Road



- #54: NSHS Mechanical Upgrades – Library
- #55: Pierce Heating System replacement
- #59: Ward and Franklin Boilers
- #60: Mason Rice Roof
- #67: Underwood Roof
- #72: Memorial Spaulding Roof
- #74: Franklin Renovation/Addition
- #75: Countryside Renovation/Addition
- #78: Horace Mann Playground
- #86: Memorial Spaulding Mechanical Upgrades
- #87: Lincoln-Eliot Roof
- #91: FA Day Variable Air Volume Upgrades
- #93: Bigelow Roof
- #94: Bowen Roof
- #96: Brown Boilers and Mechanical Systems
- #99: Ward and Underwood Renovation/Replacements
- #101: Pierce Accessibility Upgrades
- #108: Horace Mann Classroom Addition and Improvements

The Horace Mann playground project is currently listed as a separate project at #78 in the FY22-FY26 CIP because it was originally part of a different project. The playground scope could be added to the larger Horace Mann project, but keeping it separate may allow it to be funded and completed sooner, before the larger project moves forward.

The October 5, 2020 CIP memo to the School Committee did not have any priority rankings, as the final rankings are determined by the CIP Committee, and the rankings were not finalized and released until late on October 19th. The list of projects in the October 5th memo are the projects NPS requested and recommended to be included for funding over the next five years. The October 5th memo also notes the next batch of major capital projects that we hope to move forward, though the funding and timing of these projects are subject to funding availability, possible partnership with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), and other factors so the individual projects may not be funded over the next five years. It is this list of both infrastructure and major capital projects that we requested a vote on from the School Committee. NPS and the School Committee continue to rank the NECP, Lincoln-Eliot at 150 Jackson Road, Franklin and Countryside as the highest priority major capital projects for the school system. In addition, there are critical infrastructure projects and then the Ward and Underwood Schools (both 100-year old school buildings) and any additions that are determined to be necessary at Horace Mann.

The October 19th memo references the list of projects in the October 5th memo. There were no changes to the Horace Mann project from one memo to the other. Though the wording may be slightly different, it is the same major project, as indicated on slide 3 of Chief Operating Officer, Jonathan Yeo's [FY22-FY26 CIP Presentation](#) on October 19th.

Please know that we hear your deep desire to move forward as soon as possible with both the playground and the addition. We have worked hard to quickly address the needs of the Horace Mann School Community as well as the needs of so many other teachers, parents and students in other



buildings. At Horace Mann, this has included installing air conditioning, adding two modular classrooms in record speed, creating a bus loop in front of the building, enlarging classrooms and reassigning some spaces, installing sound dampening acoustical panels in all classrooms and the cafeteria, and installing sinks and water bottle filling stations on the second floor. These changes have improved space use and delivery of the educational program at Horace Mann. We are all disappointed that the pandemic has put capital building projects on hold, but we plan to continue working with the City to move the planning process forward.

Finally, the School Committee will continue to think about the relative priority of the various school projects. The CIP is a living document and thus the order of the Horace Mann projects relative to other school projects will continue to be discussed and evaluated.

Sincerely,

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