



Capital Plan Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. How long has the District been planning North and South End Preschool Centers?

In [November of 2017](#), the District proposed two options for Early Education to the Board of School Commissioners, including building two new centers in the North and South End. At that time, the District's property services indicated that they would like permission to more fully explore these options.

2. With the driveways at Edmunds and Champlain on hold, does that mean all the projects are on hold?

The District is moving forward on all other aspects of these projects presented at the board meeting, including construction of the preschool centers and presenting to community and staff.

3. When will work begin on the High School and Tech Center?

Please [click here](#) to read the recommendation for a partial demolition and reconstruction of these spaces. Included in the presentation is a timeline of what would need to happen to take a bond to the community for a vote in November.

4. Was the design phase contract for these projects publicly advertised for bidding?

No, design work is not subject to the public bid law. We have had a longstanding and good relationship with architects who've worked on these projects with us, and so we elected to continue that relationship, especially since they already have a solid understanding of our current building needs and usage.

EDMUNDS CAMPUS

1. What need would a new driveway fulfill at Edmunds?

The driveway would allow the entire complex to have one, central access point to the campus, providing a much-needed security benefit. Additionally, the Edmunds Complex has numerous accessibility issues. This new driveway would alleviate the steep grade that currently exists and serve as a tie-in to a new main entrance point that could be used by all.

2. I heard there will be a new MakerSpace in the library. Will there still be books?

YES! We are a learning institution and we love books. The current plans allow for a more efficient use of the space, with the books surrounding the MakerSpace.

NEW EARLY EDUCATION CENTERS

1. Why are we investing in more preschool space?

Our current spaces for early education and learning are outdated, cramped, spread throughout many schools, and insufficient to meet the growing need to serve preschool students in our District. Each year there is a waitlist to get into our program, and it has been growing over the past three years in part as a response to the state law that mandates universal preschool access. Each of the last two years we have had to include an increase in our budget to support universal pre-k.

2. How are these new education centers being funded?

In 2017, Burlington passed a bond allowing us to borrow \$19 million dollars over 10 years in addition to the \$2 million dollars the district is allowed to borrow each year. Together, this \$39 million will support deferred and current maintenance needs. The original plan was to retrofit and upgrade the current Early Ed Center at IRA Allen to be a more suitable learning space. However, when we began looking even more closely Ira Allen, we began to doubt the viability of upgrading the building to suit the needs of our early education program. So in November of 2017, we raised initial concerns with the school board and suggested moving toward a second option of having two satellite locations in the North and South Ends, rather than a central location at Ira Allen.

As we looked at the two options, it became apparent that building new would be better for our students, staff, and community for a number of reasons. First, the estimated cost of renovating Ira Allen was \$4.5-5 Million. This plan would have also required the District to lease new space for the District's administrative offices so that the students currently served in early education would have a place for learning while the renovations were occurring. Upon completion of the work the renovated space would be at full capacity and there would be no ability to expand the program in subsequent years in response to enrollment or programmatic needs. Furthermore, the District would continue to incur the cost of renting space for administrative offices in perpetuity, which significantly increased to cost of the Ira Allen plan.

Alternately, the construction of the two new preschool centers and administrative offices is estimated to cost \$5-5.5 Million. With this plan, the District does not need to move the early education students or staff until construction is complete, and new centers can be planned to account for possible growth of the early education programs. Once construction is complete and the students and staff are moved into their new spaces, Ira Allen could then be available to serve as swing space for students who will be impacted by other planned renovations/construction in the Capital Plan (IAA, Champlain, BHS and Tech Center, etc.). By using Ira Allen for this purpose, the district can avoid renting expensive module classrooms or leasing space. Eventually, when all the projects are complete there could be enough capacity to determine if IRA Allen should be sold for gained revenue back to taxpayers or utilized if enrollment continues to grow.

4. What does the City think of the new driveway proposed at Champlain?

DPW was supportive of a driveway that would serve both Champlain and the new preschool and even offered to construct a city-maintained road between the two! We advised against this option, and asked them to consider a gated driveway that wouldn't be used by the general public and would be maintained by the District. The Champlain driveway conforms to PlanBTV standards, calls for significantly better sidewalks and paths, and leaves an option for the city to still construct bussing lanes closer to the school at some point. Additionally, first responders greatly prefer to access both the preschool and existing property services building via Pine Street.

5. How would a new building, driveway and parking lot effect Englesby Brook in the South End?

Though the planned preschool, driveway, and parking lot would add impervious surface to the property, the current stormwater mitigation system is so poor that architects believe this project would provide a **NET-BENEFIT** to the brook.

6. What will happen to the student garden, student tool shed, and community gardens at Champlain?

If there was a driveway, the student gardens and shed would be moved to the north side of the driveway or a suitable alternative would be selected from community feedback. We would work with the community gardens to determine how to best reduce the impact of this project. It may be possible to narrow or move the garden width away from the road and/or extend the length of the gardens. There is potential for water access to be located closer to the gardens as well.

7. Have there been traffic studies done around the proposed driveway off of Pine Street and/or Shelburne Road in the South End?

RSG studied traffic patterns on Pine Street and Shelburne Road. ([You can read that study here.](#)) After the Superintendent placed the plans for a Pine Street driveway on hold, our engineers were directed to study the Shelburne Road traffic more in-depth, as their initial studies were done considering Shelburne would only be used by staff. We are awaiting those results.

8. Why are you presenting to the Conservation Board if the driveways are no longer part of the plan?

Even though we are not at this time adding a new curb cut and upgraded access drive off Pine St., we are still adding a new structure and new parking next to Englesby Brook which requires us to still bring forward the plans to the Conservation Board. We do not plan to discuss the driveway.

EARLY ED, North End

9. Will we be able to keep the trees, garden, and playground at CP Smith?

The plans include keeping but having to move pieces of the playground, and gardens. We have been actively working to retain as many trees as possible and the majority of the orchard will be untouched, though a few young trees will need to be relocated within the orchard.

10. Was the open space to the north of CP Smith considered for the preschool location?

Yes, however our underground geothermal wells in this area would not support the structure.

11. Was the space off of Goss Court considered for the preschool location?

In order to reduce costs, the proposed building would be connected to CP Smith, allowing it to share both infrastructure (sprinkler and fire alarm systems, electric, water, sewer, etc.) and staffing (kitchen, principals, nurses, etc.) resources. If the buildings were not connected, it is estimated the new building would cost about twice as much as the current project's projection.

12. Did you consider adding a road off of Goss Court to the new preschool center?

We looked at a road off of Gosse Court, but decided against cutting into this green space which had previously been earmarked for use as future athletic facilities.