



Archived/Mirrored by Comprehensive FHS from the FHS Building Project Website at <http://fhsbuildingproject.org>
 Archived on November 14, 2022
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Questions & Answers

Q. WHY DO WE NEED ANOTHER REFERENDUM?

A. The bids for the construction of the project came in 5% higher than budgeted. In today's economy, with price escalation and supply chain issues, it was not unexpected that bids exceeded the budgeted amount for a project. The Town is authorized to spend \$135.6M, which is the amount that was approved at referendum on June 3, 2021. The budget overage in construction costs brings the total project cost over the authorized amount. Another referendum is the required procedure, per the Town Charter, to increase the authorized amount.

Q. WHAT OTHER OPTIONS WERE CONSIDERED BEFORE DECIDING ON A REFERENDUM?

A. The FHS Building Committee critically analyzed all potential options as a result of the negative budget variance and made a recommendation to Town Council that they felt was in the best interest of the project after evaluating the pros, cons, and risks of the next steps. Ultimately, the FHS Building Committee recommended a referendum for an additional appropriation. The other options the Committee evaluated are listed below.

Option 1: Reallocating money by utilizing the contingency and/or Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment (FF&E) budgets to cover costs

The FHS Building Committee felt that compromising the contingency budget this early in the project would not be financially prudent, as issues may arise at any time during the project. The costs for the FF&E budget would need to be included in the Town's Capital budget in the coming years with no State reimbursement. This budget also includes monies for technology. The FHS Building Committee determined this option was high risk to the project from a financial perspective.

Option 2: Further reduce the project scope

The FHS Building Committee has already permanently cut \$9.4M out of the project through value engineering and identified an additional \$3.7M as alternates to be added back into the project in the event bidding was favorable. The FHS Building committee prioritized removing items from the project scope that did not impact educational programming. **Further reductions in project scope would have an impact on educational programming.** Additional items cut from the project would need to be included in the Town's Capital Budget in the coming years with no State reimbursement. The FHS Building Committee determined this option was high risk to the project due to the impact on educational programming and long-term costs.

The FHS Building Committee determined that another referendum could cover the budget variance and allow for alternates to be included to get the project back to the scope of what was approved at the first referendum in 2021 by leveraging the additional reimbursement granted by the State.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE REFERENDUM IS NOT APPROVED?

A. If the additional appropriation is not approved at referendum, the FHS Building Committee will have to revisit Options 1 and 2 (see above) to reduce the project scope and/or utilize the contingency/FF&E budgets to cover costs and keep the project below the initial authorization of \$135.6M.

These additional cuts would be detrimental to educational programming. Additionally, some items that could be permanently cut from the project, for example, the tennis courts, will need to be constructed at some point, whether they are a part of this project or not. If these items are not included in the project now, they will not be eligible for State reimbursement at a later date, and the full burden of the cost will fall on the taxpayers.

Further items that are cut from the project will not receive full credit back to the project, as bidders responded to the bid documents including these items.

Q. WHAT HAVE YOU CUT OUT OF THE PROJECT TO FIND EFFICIENCIES?

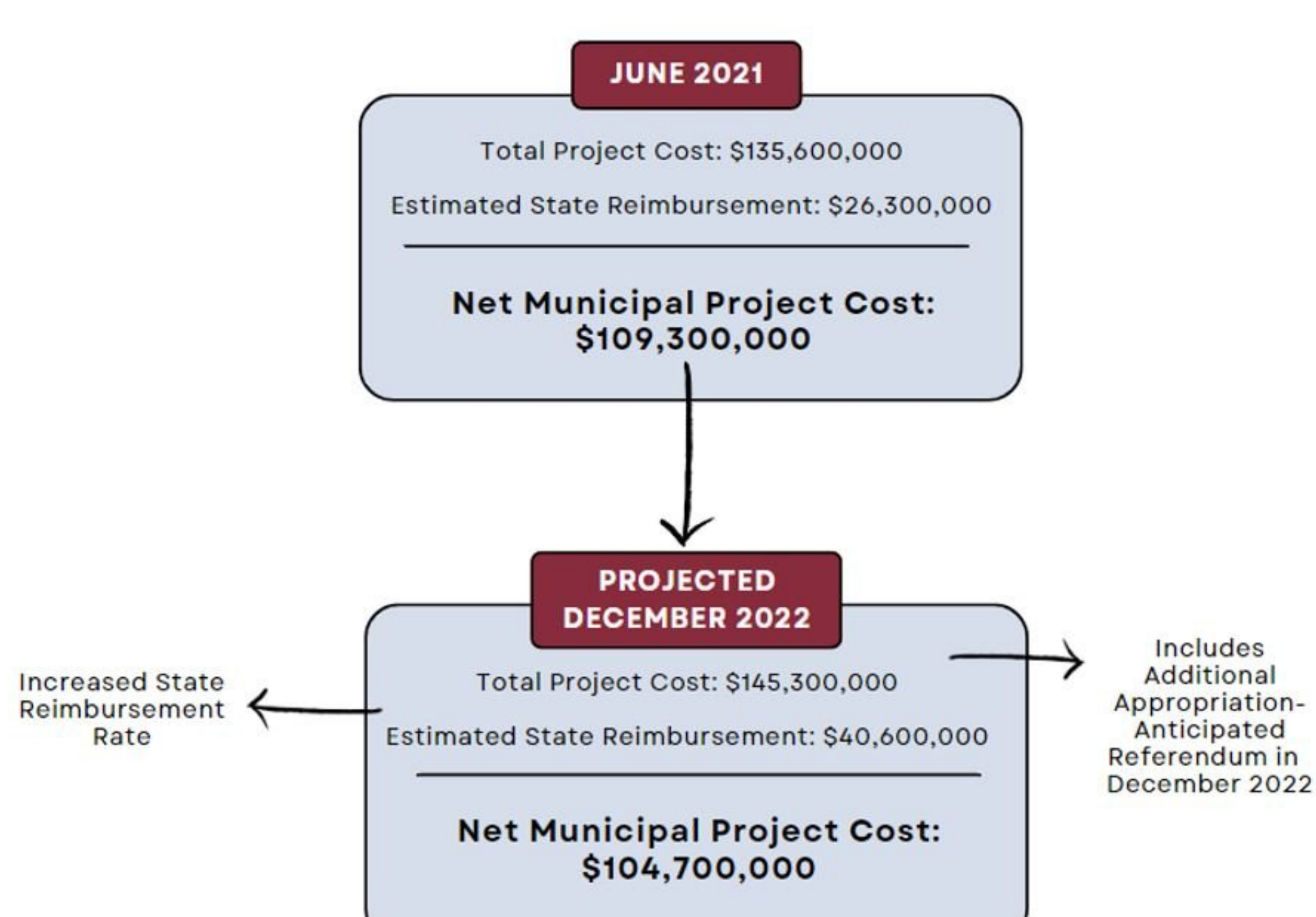
A. Many projects throughout the state are coming in 8-10% over budget due to current market conditions and inflation, and the FHS Building Committee worked diligently over the past year to try to mitigate a negative budget variance. Three times during the design process, updated cost estimates based on current market conditions were received, and the FHS Building Committee had to make cuts to maintain the project budget. **Through this value engineering process, \$9.4 M was permanently cut from the project before the invitation to bid was released,** and \$3.7M identified as alternates that were eligible to be added back into the project if bidding was favorable.

The alternates that were identified were not accessory; they were part of the original project scope approved at referendum. The committee was forced to remove these items from the project scope due to the market value of construction supplies and labor to meet the budgeted amount.

The FHS Building Committee created a master list of items approved or rejected during the value engineering process to accurately track what is included or excluded from the base bid. This document can be found [here](#).

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE ADDITIONAL REIMBURSEMENT THE TOWN RECEIVED FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT?

A. During the 2022 legislative session, the Town's reimbursement rate was changed from 18.93% for new construction and 28.93% for renovation to 30% for the entire project. This increase results in an additional \$14.4M of the project cost being reimbursed by the State of Connecticut. The only way for the project to utilize a portion of the additional reimbursement dollars to address overages due to cost escalation is to hold another referendum to increase our authorized appropriation.



With the additional reimbursement from the State of Connecticut, the net municipal cost (Town of Farmington's cost share) will be less than what was anticipated at the June 2021 referendum. In June 2021, the net municipal cost was anticipated to be \$109.3M. With an additional appropriation of \$9.7M the net municipal cost will be \$104.7M.

Q. HOW MUCH MONEY ARE YOU REQUESTING AT REFERENDUM?

A. The \$9.7M recommended by the FHS Building Committee is comprised of the following:

Base Bid Amount Over Budget	\$5,931,967.00
Alternates and Tennis Courts	\$3,752,056.00
TOTAL	\$9,684,023.00

The Tennis Courts and Alternates were reluctantly removed from the project scope during the value engineering process and identified as alternates with the hopes that they would be included if bidding was favorable. If these items are not included in the project, they will not be eligible for the 30% reimbursement at a later date.

Adding these items back into the project restores the project back to the scope of what was approved at the first referendum in 2021, while utilizing the additional reimbursement approved by the state. The Alternates include:

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST
Wood Ceiling In Lieu of ACT	\$435,566.00
Operable Wall Partition Between Gymnasiums	\$659,846.00
Ground Face CMU In Lieu of GYP BD Partition Type	\$619,625.00
Porcelain Tile in Lieu of Linoleum Tile	\$269,364.00
Operable Windows to Exterior Curtain wall and Storefront Assemblies	\$145,894.00
GWB Soffit in Stairwells Under Stairs and Landings	\$47,045.00
Elevator #3 in Area E	\$174,982.00
One Exterior Horizontal Sunshade Per Window	\$236,284.00
TOTAL-ALTERNATES INCLUDED	\$2,588,607.00
TOTAL- TENNIS COURT	\$1,163,449.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$3,752,056.00

Q. HOW DOES THE PROJECT IMPACT MY TAXES?

A. The projected tax impact to the average taxpayer (assessment of \$226,777) for the FHS Building Project went from \$466 over five years to \$491 over five years. This is an additional \$25 over five years, or \$5 per year.

The \$25 increase is driven primarily by the increased interest costs on the assumed debt service for the high school project.

Please visit the [Project Cost](#) page to view the Town's Financial Forecast and resources related to this project.

Q. WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED TIMELINE?

November 9, 2022 • Community Meeting FHS Auditorium @ 6PM
November 15, 2022 • Town Council Meeting to vote on bonding resolution and to hold a Town Meeting and Referendum
November 28, 2022 • Proposed Town Meeting
December 8, 2022 • Proposed Referendum

The timeline to a December 8th referendum is quick because bids are only held for 90 days by the contractors. It is essential to lock in these bid prices, as there is a potential that they would be higher and have longer lead times if the bids expire and the project must be rebid. An early December referendum is also proposed to avoid a referendum during the upcoming holiday season.

Q. WHY IS THIS PROJECT SO IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY?

A. High-quality schools protect property values. Realtors routinely cite the quality of our school system for promoting home ownership in Farmington. Farmington High School also is home to many recreational and educational programs. Over 150 Adult and Continuing Education classes and more than 125 Groups use the school's classrooms, library, cafeteria, gymnasium, and auditorium. These classes and group activities generate additional revenue. The new facility will better serve sports and recreation, performing arts, and clubs and organizations in our community.

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