

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Will this project raise my taxes?

No, the levy required to generate \$7 million, based on current valuation, is the same as the current levy. The current levy was approved for the elementary/middle school addition 15+ years ago and will be completely paid off June 2017; district patrons have been paying this amount over that same 15+ time period. The new levy would simply replace the old levy. Further, if taxable valuation in the district were to increase as anticipated, the levy rate would go down as a lower levy would be needed to generate the \$7 million.

- How big is the auditorium?

Current plans call for 600 seats in the auditorium. The committee believes this is an adequate number for most performances; however things like graduation will need to remain in the gym due to the larger crowd. The committee also believes the 600 seats is a reasonable balance of being high functioning but not as cost prohibitive like a larger facility would be.

- Can the auditorium be used by the public?

Absolutely - the auditorium would be available for local groups, churches, etc. The only restriction is availability would be based on student need as the students would be the priority.

- Do we really need an auditorium?

In the opinion of the Facilities Committee, the answer is a resounding yes! Currently there is not even a stage in the district which causes all fine arts events to use the high school commons, the high school gym, or be moved to a neighboring school district/town. Some have said the fine arts performances could always be in Winterset. Our response is would we ever consider having all our home athletic events at a neighboring community? The committee believes the fine arts students deserve a quality facility constructed specifically for their needs. Further, the auditorium would also be used during the academic day as available classroom space and also by our communities.

- Is there a SAFE room currently in the school? In these plans?

There currently is not a SAFE room in the entire facility; in time of a tornado or other natural disaster, students currently go to interior spaces away from windows. And yes, the plan includes the auditorium being built as a SAFE room; its central location would allow the auditorium to be used by both elementary and secondary students in time of a tornado or other natural disaster. Further, the committee will be looking for grant opportunities to support building the auditorium as a SAFE room.

- How big is the CTE building? Would a new facility positively impact programming and choices for students?

Concept plans call for the CTE building to be 9,360 square feet; current CTE space is 3708 square feet. Further, current CTE space includes two small shop areas, one small classroom, and fragmented storage areas. The new facility would include two classrooms, and storage; the concept is to create open shop space that is flexible in meeting the changing needs of the program. The process is underway to expand the CTE program to give students more opportunities to prepare for the workforce and/or

additional study in Iowa labor shortage fields. This process will include visiting other facilities/programs, as well as meeting with leaders within the various industries.

- **How big is the bus shed? What all will be included in the space? Why a bus shed as it doesn't directly impact students?**

Concept plans call for the bus shed to be 15,480 square feet. The "scaled down" plan would include a bay for washing buses, a bay to work on the buses, storage area, and office space; the building would be expandable to include bays to actually house buses inside in the future if so desired. The current bus shed does not allow for working on buses due to space and safety restrictions; storage space for parts et al. is also extremely limited. The intent is to be able to do more work on buses ourselves instead of sending out the work to other business, e.g., save district money. It is possible the district may look to employ our own mechanic at some point (or share with another district); however this possibility does not exist unless there is a facility available that allows more work to be completed onsite.

- **Why isn't air conditioning the main building the highest priority?**

Initially air conditioning was not included in the project; after receiving input from a number of people, air conditioning will either be part of this project or done as a standalone project by the district.

- **What would the timeline be for construction? Order and phases of construction?**

The preliminary timeline would be:

1. CTE bids would go out in March 2017 with construction to start spring/summer of 2017
2. We would move into the new CTE building by January 2018

The remainder of the project, e.g., fine arts center, auditorium, etc. would begin in fall 2017, with sequencing to be as follows:

1. Demolition of the current CTE space and remodeling/construction of the new fine arts area
2. Estimated time for the new fine arts center to be completed and fully functional is spring 2018
3. Construction of the auditorium would begin summer 2018 and be completed during the 2018-2019 school year
4. The bus shed and maintenance shed would be coordinated with one of the other projects in order to enlarge the project and get more competitive bids
5. Work in both the elementary lunchroom and high school commons would be coordinated with construction of the auditorium.

As the architects move from concept drawings into the programming and design stage and into the design development stage, a more specific timeline will be developed and shared.

- **Will the construction disrupt student learning?**

Construction of the CTE, bus shed, maintenance shed, and fine arts area will not really disrupt student learning as all are reasonably isolated from the main building; with careful timing and planning, disruptions will be minimal. Construction of the auditorium would be started in the summer so the most disruptive work would be done while school is not in session; there invariably will be some disruptions due to construction but every effort will be made to minimize these to the regular school day and experience.

- **Is there room for expansion of these facilities if a need exists in the future?**

Yes, a priority of Phase I Site Planning was to ensure flexibility in the future should enrollment increase and additional facilities would be needed. As far as these specific facilities, the CTE building, bus shed, and maintenance shed would all be metal buildings that could be expanded in the future if needed. The new fine arts area would also have room to the north available for future growth. The auditorium would not have the flexibility for growth unless substantial changes were made to the high school main entrance and the frontage road in front of the school; the 600 seat auditorium is as big as the current space allows. If substantial growth to the district were to occur necessitating additional classroom space or a new school building, the current baseball and softball fields could be moved to the 20 acres located just north of the current building that is owned by the district and that space utilized. Additional building could also occur anywhere in the 20 acre parcel north of the current building owned by the school.

- **At one point, there was talk about moving the baseball and softball fields ... what are we doing with those?**

Initial discussions and concept maps developed during Phase I included moving the baseball and softball fields to the property north of the school near the current football field and track, e.g., sports complex. Costs for developing this area, e.g., roads, sewer, water, and electricity were cost prohibitive at this time. Because of the cost, the baseball and softball fields will stay in their current location. The potential to move the fields still exists in the future should the need or desire occur.

- **Will these improvements equate to more staffing needs?**

The only anticipated staffing needs due to these facility improvements would be additional custodial time, e.g., additional square footage to clean. Staffing for teachers is contingent on student enrollment in the classes so there really is no way to quantify that possibility at this time.

- **Does the Board have the authority to change the project?**

No, once the signed petition is presented to and approved by the Board, the project is limited to whatever was described in the petition language.

- **How was the Facilities Committee formed?**

The Board directed Superintendent Kevin Fiene to put together chairs or co-chairs for a Facilities Committee; that is how the Steering Committee consisting of Cindy Cassady, Tim Palmer, Pat Thornburgh, and Nancy Von Feldt came into existence. These four were asked to serve based on having representation from New Virginia, Truro, and St. Charles; Tim was asked because of his involvement and past experience in these types of projects. The Steering Committee then met and looked for representatives from various constituencies, e.g., parents, people without kids in school, business, retired, etc. All School Board members and staff members were asked to offer suggestions; the school also posted an invitation to serve on the Facilities Committee on the district website and Facebook page. Ultimately the Steering Committee reviewed all nominations and those that volunteered, and selected members to invite in order to have widespread representation; they were not bound to follow the suggestions shared by staff and School Board members.

- **If I'm interested, how can I join the Facilities Committee?**

Simply contact any of the Steering Committee members!