

District: Springfield  
 School Name: Forest Park Middle School  
 Recommended Category: Preferred Schematic and Project Scope and Budget  
 Date: March 30, 2011

Recommendation:

That the Executive Director be authorized to enter into a Project Funding Agreement with the City of Springfield to construct additions and renovations at the existing Forest Park Middle School.

<b>District Information</b>	
District Name:	City of Springfield
Early Childhood Center:	1 – Margaret C. Ells (PK-1)
K-12 Facility:	1 – Springfield Academy for Excellence (K-12)
Elementary/Middle Schools:	12 – PK-5 Schools 18 – K-5 Schools 1 – PK-8 School
Middle Schools:	7 – 6-8 Schools
Middle/High School:	1 – 6-12 School
High Schools:	4 – 9-12 Schools
Priority School Name:	Forest Park Middle School
Type of School:	Middle School
Grades Served:	6-8
Year Opened:	1899
Total Square Footage:	141,355 sf (including additions and renovations)
Additions:	- Addition in 1919 - Addition in 1936 - In 1937, the third floor was removed in its entirety
Acreage of Site:	3.7 acres (including 0.9 acres recently acquired)
Building Issues:	The District noted deficiencies in the following areas: - Inefficient and dysfunctional mechanical and electrical systems; - Windows, original wood floors over wood framing in classrooms; - Structural System deficiencies; and - Minor overcrowding.
Original Design Capacity:	578 students in original building
2010-2011 Enrollment:	798
Agreed Upon Enrollment:	660
Enrollment Specifics:	The Department of Education’s initial enrollment for this waiting list project was 1,000 students. The City submitted an updated proposal for a design enrollment of 660 students for the Forest Park Middle School project. MSBA staff performed an analysis of historical and projected enrollment trends within the District, discussed the findings with the City and agreed that this design

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	enrollment would enable the District to efficiently meet enrollment needs throughout fluctuations in the City’s enrollment over time.

MSBA Board Invites:	
Invitation to Feasibility Study:	The Forest Park Middle School project in the City of Springfield was originally approved by the former Department of Education (“DOE”) and placed on the DOE’s School Building Assistance program Waiting List for school construction projects in FY2001. This project was among the projects grandfathered for funding, pursuant to meeting certain conditions, when the Massachusetts School Building Authority (“MSBA”) was created in 2004.

<b>Consultants</b>	
Owners Project Manager:	Arcadis
Designer:	Perkins Eastman

Discussion:

The original facility, a three-story building known as the “little school house in the midst of a wilderness,” served as a K-9 school until 1917 when the superintendent changed the Forest Park School to a junior high school. The City constructed the first addition in 1919, then in 1936, added a second addition and removed the third floor. The Forest Park Middle School is located on a constrained site across the street from Forest Park, the City’s largest public park which the School historically has used for playing fields, a practice which the City intends to continue.

Under the former Department of Education’s School Building Assistance program, the City conducted a site selection study to identify options and determine the best site upon which to construct a new middle school to replace the existing facility. The Site Selection Study, Forest Park Middle School, was completed in July of 2008 and included the development of educational specifications, conceptual floor plans, conceptual site plans, and preliminary design estimates for each of the four options studied:

Option	Location	Estimated Project Cost
Kenwood Terrace Site	Across Oakland Street, east of the existing facility	\$40.9 million
Sumner Terrace Site	Behind the existing facility	\$46.0 million
Oakland Street Site	In front of the existing facility	\$46.5 million
Belmont Avenue Site	On property bounded by Belmont Avenue, Oakland Avenue and Crystal Avenue, north of the existing facility.	\$40.9 million

All of the options required land takings to allow for the construction of a new facility while the existing facility remains online. The study provided a matrix of pros and cons for each option but stopped short of recommending a preferred solution. Based on the information contained in the Site Selection Study, the City investigated potential land takings. Based on initial efforts and investigations into potential land takings it became clear that the City needed to consider options beyond those included in the Site Selection Study.

In a letter dated June 11, 2009, the MSBA requested that the City demonstrate substantial progress on the Forest Park Middle School Project (#W20014137) in order for the MSBA to continue with the project. In a letter dated June 23, 2009 the City documented its desire to change the project from the construction of a new school to the renovation of the existing school because it would be a more fiscally achievable and environmentally sound option, and stated its intention to proceed under the current regulations and policies of the MSBA.

The City secured the services of an Owner’s Project Manager in May of 2010 and continued to investigate potential land takings based on the previous Site Selection Study and the understanding that a renovation project also would require the taking of adjacent properties in order to address the significant issues associated with the gymnasium. Utilizing the MSBA designer selection process, a designer was selected, and the City contracted with the designer to investigate and analyze potential renovation and renovation addition options for the Forest Park Middle School. With an understanding of the properties that were being considered, the designer evaluated existing conditions, developed educational space needs in collaboration with the City, and evaluated design options.

On February 11, 2011, the City completed the procedure necessary to secure legal control and access to six adjacent properties needed to support the project. The City’s Feasibility Report, dated February 28, 2011, documents the City’s work and details three design options. The following design parameters are common to all three options presented below:

- The existing facility is to be renovated with upgrades to the envelope and building systems.
- Upgrades and improvements to ADA access will be required.
- The majority of existing walls and layout will be maintained to minimize work associated with seismic upgrades.
- Core academic spaces will be removed from the basement level.
- The historic auditorium will be maintained.
- A new gymnasium will need to be constructed as an addition.

Option	Description	Features
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter the facility on the existing first floor level (current arrangement)</li> <li>• Cafeteria and Kitchen remain on the north end of the building</li> <li>• Gymnasium addition of 12,000 sf</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to enter facility at the first floor level</li> <li>• Lower level (current basement) remains cut off from the rest of the school</li> <li>• ADA access only partially solved</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust site grade and entrance to allow entrance at the ground level</li> <li>• Cafeteria and Kitchen remain on the north end of the building</li> <li>• Gymnasium addition of 10,800 sf</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better utilization of existing space on the lower level</li> <li>• Better connections between the lower level with the rest of the school</li> <li>• Better ADA access</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust site grade and entrance to allow entrance at the ground level</li> <li>• Cafeteria and Kitchen moved to the south end of the building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better utilization of existing space on the lower level</li> <li>• Better connections between the lower level with the rest of the school</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gymnasium addition of 8,800 sf</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved adjacencies between the kitchen and loading dock area</li> <li>Better ADA access</li> <li>Size of the addition is reduced because of better overall utilization of the existing facility</li> </ul>
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The District recommends Option 3, which through maximized use of the lower level allows for improved academic adjacencies, better building utilization and a reduction in the overall size of the needed addition and provides the most educationally appropriate and cost effective solution. The recommended option creates a new drop-off area to improve overall traffic circulation, revitalizes the ground floor and creates a more efficient building with improved educational adjacencies, provides an emergency egress from Sumner Terrace and includes new infrastructure for all building systems.

On June 30, 2009, the Springfield Finance Control Board (“FCB”) voted affirmatively to support the City’s desire to proceed with the renovation of the existing Forest Park Middle School and approved any associated appropriations, borrowing authorizations, transfers, or any other municipal spending authorizations. The MSBA’s share of funding for the proposed Forest Park Middle project was established under the former Department of Education’s School Building Assistance program and through the MSBA’s Grant Conversion Program\* as follows:

Forest Park Grant	\$29,435,611
Balliet Elementary School Waiting List Grant Converted to Forest Park Middle School	\$9,627,163
Maximum Total Facilities Grant	\$39,062,774
Reimbursement Rate	90.00%

<b>Project Funding Agreement</b>	
Design Enrollment: 660 Total Gross Square Feet: 148,800 Renovated Gross Square Feet: 140,000 New Gross Square Feet: 8,800	Basis of Total Facilities Grant*
Forest Park Maximum Total Facilities Grant	\$29,435,611
Balliet ES Waiting List Grant Converted to Forest Park MS**	\$9,627,163
Total Facilities Grant	\$39,062,774
Reimbursement Rate	90.00%
Total Project Budget:	\$43,403,082
Project Cost per square foot:	\$292
Preliminary Design Construction Budget:	\$35,350,000
Construction Cost per square foot:	\$238

\*This amount does not contain a final, exhaustive list of all budget, cost and scope items which may be ineligible for reimbursement by the MSBA. Nor is it intended to be a final determination of which budget, cost and scope items may be eligible for reimbursement by the MSBA. All project budget, cost and scope items shall be subject to review and audit by the Authority, and the Authority shall determine, in its sole discretion whether any such budget, cost and scope items are eligible for reimbursement. The MSBA may determine that certain additional budget, cost and scope items are ineligible for reimbursement.

*\*\*The MSBA's Grant Conversion Program allowed districts with multiple projects on the DOE Waiting List to remove a project from the Waiting List and convert the approved grant for that project to another project on the Waiting List where the district could demonstrate, among other things, that the district would be able to adequately accommodate students, programs and services that would have been provided by the school project that is being removed from the Waiting List within other school facilities in the district.*

MSBA staff have reviewed the documentation provided by the District and have discussed with the District and its consultants the scope and budget. The District is committed to maintaining an overall \$43.4 million total project budget (which is also the Basis of Total Facilities Grant) that has been established for this Waiting List project and reports that cost estimates are being updated as the project proceeds to achieve that primary objective.

MSBA staff recommends a maximum Total Facilities Grant of \$39,062,774 for the Project Funding Agreement for the City of Springfield to construct additions and renovations at the existing Forest Park Middle School.