



FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 10, 2024

FAIRHAVEN TOWN CLERK
RCVD 2024 MAY 9 PM 2:35

MEMBERS PRESENT: Colin Veitch, Brian Monroe, Erik Andersen,, Stephanie Pickup, Nicole Pacheco, Brendalee Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Superintendent Tara Kohler, School Business Manager Nicole Potter, Assistant Superintendent Mark Balestracci

OTHERS PRESENT: Parent via Zoom

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Kohler at 6:30 pm for reorganization. Mrs. Kohler opened up nominations for Chair. Mr. Monroe nominated Mr. Veitch for Chair, Mrs. Smith seconded, approved unanimously (6-0). Mr. Veitch then asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Mrs. Pickup nominated Mr. Monroe as Vice Chair, seconded by Mr. Eriksen, approved unanimously (6-0). Mr. Veitch welcomed new member Brendalee Smith to the Committee, as well as welcoming back the current members that were re-elected. He then continued with the Committee assignments.

- Mr. Monroe nominated Mrs. Pacheco for the Wellness Committee, Mr. Veitch seconded, approved unanimously (6-0).
- Mr. Veitch nominated Mrs. Smith as SMEC Representative, Mr. Monroe seconded, approved unanimously (6-0).
- Mr. Monroe nominated Mr. Veitch and Mrs. Pickup for the Financial Policy Review Committee, seconded by Mr. Andersen, approved unanimously (6-0).
- Mr. Veitch nominated Mr. Andersen, Mrs. Pickup, and Mr. Monroe for the Policy Sub-Committee, Mrs. Pacheco seconded, approved unanimously (6-0).
- Mr. Veitch nominated Mr. Andersen for the Civil Rights Task Force Bullying Plan, Mrs. Pacheco seconded, approved unanimously (6-0).

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve regular session minutes from March 27, 2024 made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Ms. Pacheco, approved with one abstention, Mrs. Smith (5-0-1).

Motion to approve budget hearing minutes from March 27, 2024 made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Ms. Pacheco, approved with one abstention, Mrs. Smith (5-0-1).

Report of the Student Advisory Committee:

Ms. DaCunha and Mr. Reynolds reported on the sports and activities of Fairhaven High School (FHS).

Reports and Recommendations of the Superintendent:

FY25 Budget Update:

Mrs. Kohler shared an updated presentation of the FY25 drafted budget (Attachment A). The Net School Spending (NSS) number remains at \$24,568,609 and she reiterated this is not a match for the Town request. The Special Education increase was approximately \$500,000. Our official recommended number for FY25 is \$25,149,917. Mrs. Kohler reminded the Committee that she previously shared we would be losing some things no matter what, even with that number. Explaining that is due to the expiring grants such as Esser III and the Workforce Health Grant, the associated reductions affect afterschool programs, transportation, School Adjustment Counselor, High School Special Education Teacher, Student Technology Coordinator, and Innovation teacher, as well as a Float Nurse and a per diem support Nurse. Mrs. Kohler explained we have a restructure request of making the retiring IT Professional Development Specialist position that is currently part time to full time. Mrs. Kohler also reiterated from previous meetings that the Town budget process requested all departments to establish a "Level Service" budget. What that means for the Fairhaven Public School District (FPSD) is that our "Level Service" budget presented on March 13, 2024, March 20, 2024, and March 27, 2024 is inclusive of the FY24 approved contingent budget numbers, both positions and programs. The Town's most recent shortfall for FPSD is \$447,000. Mrs. Kohler and Mrs. Potter, in working with the Town and the State's Grant Coordinator, have found ways to offset this number. There was a slight error in the \$447,000 number by \$734, we will have to offset the SPED Stabilization Fund with approval from the School Committee as well as the Select Board. Our final reduction number would be \$447,734 and the new proposed budget request for FY25 is \$24,702,183.

Mr. Monroe commented that this number puts us only a half a percent above NSS. He also stated that the average of most school districts in Massachusetts fall approximately 26% above NSS, noting this is the worst he has seen in his 13 years on this committee. He also reiterated his frustration with the number errors from the Town, using the \$734 as another example. The constant changes from week to week this close to the Town Meeting should not be acceptable. Mrs. Kohler agrees with the frustration.

Mrs. Pacheco asked to confirm which after school programs were being cut. Mrs. Kohler stated the elementary programs that were grant funded. Mrs. Kohler mentioned that there is normally a "pool" of money from retirements and the hiring process that may help offset some of the grant funded cuts. She will come to the Committee around July with the dollar amount and ask where they would like the money to go.

Mr. Andersen reiterated the frustration of Mr. Monroe regarding NSS. He realized it is hard to understand, but feels as though members of the Finance Committee cannot be bothered to learn. He feels as though it's appalling. Knowing the Town is always talking about getting more residents, he stated after location, one of the first things potential residents look at is the schools and if people see we can't get about that NSS line and continue on a downward trend, they won't be coming. He believes Town grows because of the schools.

Mrs. Kohler responded as she agrees it is frustrating, this was the first time at the joint meeting with the Select Board and Finance Committee that there wasn't an argument about how we are managing the money. She stated she feels that is growth. The District received a compliment of doing more with less in spite of our number. She also stated the teachers felt they have to work that much harder due to lack of funding. Mrs. Kohler stated her point being, when working on offsetting the \$447,734, they were very mindful to choose options that minimally affected NSS. Mrs. Kohler reminded the Committee that she works on the Legislative Committee, who have been working hard to share information as well as get better

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 10, 2024

PAGE 2

funding. The District was notified that The House Ways & Means budget has been released, it will still need to be adopted, but it states \$104 per child rather than \$30 per child which means \$118,000 for FPSD. She also stated that this is part of our Chapter 70 money, noting that if that increases lives in the budget, she would like there to be a caveat that we do not reduce our budget by \$118,000, but that our \$447, 734 is reduced by the difference we gain in that process. Mr. Veitch asked about the timing of the money, Mrs. Kohler stated she does not know if it will be on time, she wanted to state her opinion if it is. Mr. Monroe mentioned that the District has the right to place an article at the Special Town Meeting to request the money. Mrs. Kohler agreed and wanted to apprise the Committee of the possibility of the additional \$118,000 for the purpose of working on how to get it back into the District.

Mr. Veitch asked when the request will go to the Select Board regarding the Stabilization Fund. Mrs. Kohler believes sometime in July. Mr. Veitch also commented they have done a lot of work with the Town this budget season, and he understands from an accountant's perspective the simple math that gets used for the cuts, and our portion of the cuts, but he believes at some point the Town has to change direction as far as the value of education. The kids that are graduating are our neighbors, who will be buying houses, having jobs, raising families, and paying taxes, and at some point it will be a downward spiral that will cost more money later. He cannot understand why the Town cannot see philosophically putting money into education has a net benefit at the end of more money for the Town.

Discussion ensued on what additional resources can do for the children in the FPSD.

Mrs. Pickup requested Mrs. Kohler re-explain the risk of falling below NSS and also the effect of Acushnet regionalizing with Old Rochester Regional would have on FPSD. Mrs. Kohler stated there is a baseline in which we are supposed to meet to say that we've done the foundation, the very bottom level of what our students and staff need, the foundation budget. There is also NSS, which about two years out, you get that figure for two years prior. Mrs. Potter constantly monitors that we are hitting NSS, we are very close to that figure. It is all the money that goes into education minus certain things. If the number dips under NSS, the first year there is a warning issued, if it continues there is a penalty of a dollar amount that comes off of the Chapter 70 money that does not get lifted.

Mrs. Kohler then explained the General Fund that the Town has is a number of things that we help contribute to things such as documenting medicaid, and those monies go back to the Town. Same thing happens with Acushnet tuition. It is approximately 2.3 to 2.5 million dollars that goes to the Town from tuition expenses. Mrs. Kohler stated we are about a year and a half out from having the Acushnet tuition agreement expire. She went on to say that at one point Acushnet expressed interest in the possibility of regionalizing with FPSD, that is no longer their intent. Acushnet has expressed interest in adding another school to their tuition agreement which could have an impact on us. She also noted that if that money goes down, it will affect the entire Town, not just the schools. She stated that because of this the vision people are seeing, that we are taking a lot of hits, or not being valued sends messages that extend way beyond Fairhaven. Mrs. Smith asked what percentage of the 2.3 million from Acushnet do we get back from the Town and is the Town aware that the contract with Acushnet is expiring in a year and a half, and are they already saying they are not going to continue with us? Mrs. Kohler answered they are not saying they are not going to continue, she believes they hope to have multiple High School options. Our contract states they need our approval to go ahead and enter in an agreement with another District, our stance is unless we are going to extend our contract, we do not have a desire to do that. Mr. Veitch reiterated that the tuition money goes into the "one big pot theory", the General Fund, with things like tax levy, excise taxes, etc. It gets divided up with certain calculations and we get about 45% of that, where it used to be 57%. It all goes in and out according to Town Meeting votes, that is why Town Meeting is so important.

Receive Update on Innovation Pathway Designation:

Mr. Balestracci stated we have been fully awarded by the Healey-Driscoll Administration a \$75,000 grant for Innovation Pathways in the business and finance sector. Mr. Balestracci recognize Mrs. Sabah and Mr. Kulak for their tremendous work in getting this up and running. Mr. Balestracci noted they will be starting the outreach and recruitment after vacation so families can expect some information from the High School. They will be targeting grade 9, there are 16 available slots. He finished by saying this is the first of hopefully multiple pathways opportunities that we will pursue. Mr. Balestracci answered Mrs. Pickup's question, stating we are the only District in the South Coast awarded this year.

Receive Update on the School Food Service Process:

Mrs. Potter stated the Food Service bids were due on March 25, 2024. We had one responder, Chartwells, which is our current company. She noted we still had to go through an evaluation process. The vendor did come back as highly advantageous, so we were able to award them the contract. She stated we are waiting on the State to release their template in order to enter into the agreement. She stated Chartwells has done some great things for FPSD such as bringing on a student engagement coordinator who has been doing sample testing in the cafeteria's, sending out surveys, etc. in order to get student feedback.

Mrs. Pickup asked what happens with the extra food that doesn't get consumed. Mrs. Kohler stated that is the type of topic they discuss within the Wellness Committee. She stated they do have a Share Table. Mrs. Potter added around Covid some of the rules and regulations changes regarding the Share Table, so it will need re-evaluation. Mrs. Potter also noted that this is a federally funded program and there are a lot of laws and regulations that are embedded within it.

Receive Update on the (FHS) Phase I Process:

Mrs. Potter reiterated that we signed the contract with Spencer Preservation. We had testing done on the gable by the third floor classroom. An engineer will be on site next week to start inspections so we can get the documents together in order to get architectural drawings and get the entire project out to bid then start construction as soon as possible.

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 10, 2024

PAGE 3

Receive Update on the Elizabeth Hastings Middle School (EHMS) Roof Project:

Mrs. Potter reminded the Committee about the flashing that needs to be repaired. We solicited quotes from architects and received a proposal from a company that has worked with us in the past. She stated we will be signing with them and they will investigate what it entails and how much the cost will be.

Receive Update on FHS Storage Facility:

Mr. Balestracci stated the full building permit has been issued. The Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School (GNBVT) students will begin construction on April 22, 2024. He noted there will be a trailer on site for a short period of time to hold materials needed. He is in the process of putting out invitations to bid for the roof. Mrs. Pickup stated although she cannot guarantee anything, she reiterated Care Free Homes does a lot of community stuff and everything's pretty easy for them. She reasked for a set of the plans to be emailed to her.

Receive Update on Wood School Playground Surface Project:

Mrs. Potter stated schedule construction will begin June 17, 2024. She presented a slide (Attachment B) of what the colors will look like. The company will also be replacing some of the rusted equipment that is under warranty. She noted it will be approximately 6-8 weeks of construction. She also thanked the County Commissioners for allocating \$300,000 to this project. Mr. Monroe asked what the warranty is on the surface. Mrs. Potter did not have that information on hand, but not long. She also stated the life of the surface is approximately 10 years. Mr. Monroe asked if there is surveillance at the playground, Mrs. Potter confirmed there are cameras there. Mrs. Pickup asked if there are signs stating the cameras are in place as this may be a deterrent to someone who was inclined to purposely damage the playground. Mrs. Potter stated there are signs on the buildings. Mrs. Kohler stated they can look into something more prominent.

Upcoming Events:

May 8, 2024 - Next School Committee Meeting

New Business:

A motion was made by Mr. Monroe to approve the budget figure for FY25 in the amount of \$24,702,183 seconded by Mr. Andersen, approved unanimously (6-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Monroe to approve all school field trip for East Fairhaven Elementary School, seconded by Mr. Andersen, approved unanimously (6-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Andersen, to table the vote for the all school field trip for Leroy Wood Elementary School, seconded by Mr. Monroe, approved unanimously (6-0).

Questions from Individual Committee Members:

Mrs. Pickup asked how the new storage facility is being funded. Mrs. Kohler stated we already had the supplies, we do not pay the GNBVT students for the work. She will be coming to the Committee in the future for payment from the Trust to fund the construction of the roof and the bricks.

Mr. Andersen, thanked the EHMS PTO for the help in lowering the cost of the 8th grade trip.

Any Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours Prior to the Posting of this Meeting:

Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the public body and chair so declares and to not return into open session made by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Andersen, roll call vote, approved (6-0).

Adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Sheri Souza
Secretary to the School Committee
Fairhaven Public Schools

Approved
May 8, 2024

FAIRHAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FY25 Budget Update

Presentation

April 10, 2024



Big Picture



Required Net School Spending = Local Contribution + Ch 70 Aid

Required Net School Spending > = Foundation Budget

FY25 Required Net School Spending: **\$24,568,609**

Core Values



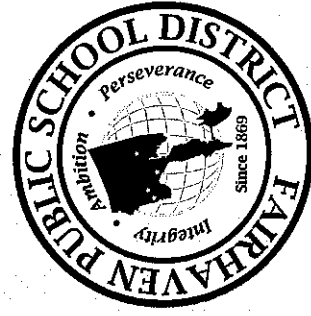
The implementation of our district's vision for all of our graduates states our shared beliefs regarding the purpose of our schools, the role of our adults, and the fundamental principles and practices around teaching and learning.

1. **Safe and supportive learning environment.**
2. **Mindsets of ambition, perseverance, and integrity.**
3. Provide an educational program delivered by a consistent **system of teaching and learning** supported by a continuum of student services to meet our mission.
4. We strive to place the people, structures, and systems in position to provide the resources and to **support the vision of our graduates.**
5. Prioritize **strategic partnerships** that promote collaborative planning to identify and advance opportunities for cooperation between town departments, neighboring municipalities, and community organizations, to examine possible areas of collaboration and partnership so as to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the services that we provide.
6. Opportunities to explore **College and Career Options** throughout their experience in the Fairhaven Public School District and to create pathways that ensure their readiness to be **successful upon graduation from High School.**

Special Education Expenses

SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENSES

	ACTUAL EXPENSE	FY 2023 CIRCUIT BREAKER CARRYOVER OFFSET	TOWN BUDGETED FIGURE
9100 TUITION TO INSTATE DAY			0
9200 TUITION TO OUT OF STATE SCHOOLS			0
9300 TUITION TO NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1,545,410	-687,657	657,753
9400 TOTAL TUITION TO COLLABORATIVES	888,000		888,000
TOTAL	2,353,410	-687,657	1,545,753



Official recommended School Budget Request

\$25,149,917

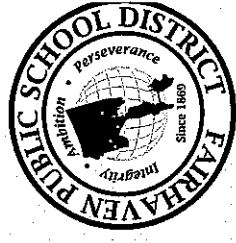


Expiring Grants and Associated Reductions

ESSER III: Previously reduced positions through attrition

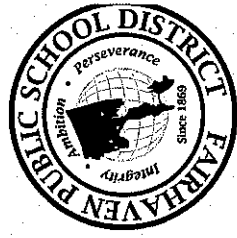
FY25 - After School Programs and transportation, School Adjustment Counselor, High School SPED teacher, Student Technology Coordinator, Innovation Teacher

Workforce Health Grant - Float Nurse, per diem support



Restructure Request

Retiring IT Professional Development specialist to Full Time



Budget Entry Point

FY'25 Town Budget Process requested reductions across all departments to establish a "Level Service" budget.

What does this mean for the Fairhaven Public Schools Budget?

-Level Service Budget presented March 13, March 20, and March 27, Inclusive of FY'24 approved contingent budget numbers positions/programs.

Town's most recent budget shortfall for the Fairhaven Public Schools is \$447,000.



Being Mindful of Net School Spending:

Business Manager worked with State Grant Coordinator to make following adjustments:

- Allowance of \$15,000 for Professional Development from Title IIA and Title IV.
- Allowance of \$134,000 in Technology Instructional Supplies from ESSER III.

Superintendent worked with Town Administrator and Assistant Town Administrator to coordinate the following:

- Create a McKinney-Vento/Foster Care transportation account within the town to absorb approximately \$128,000 costs that will get partially reimbursed to the town general fund.
- Offset Pre-K transportation with additional \$30,000 from the Pre-K tuition revolving account.

Transportation Coordinator worked to assess bus eligible students, locations of stops, and bus capacity numbers:

- to reduce a route for a savings of approximately \$59,000.

Assistant Superintendent and Director of Student Services:

- working to hard to meet the needs of all students to limit any unanticipated OOD costs.

FPS Proposed Adjustments for Consideration

Total offset from Instruction: **\$149,000**

- \$15,000 reduction from Professional Development (Grant Offset)
- \$134,000 reduction from Instructional Technology (Grant Offset)

Total Reduction and offset from Transportation: **\$217,000**

- \$30,000 (Pre-K Tuition Offset)
- \$59,000 (Elimination of 1 bus)
- \$128,000 (McKinney-Vento/Foster Transportation offset account)

- Total offset for Out of District Tuitions: **\$81,734**
Offset from Special Education Stabilization Fund



Total Proposed Adjustments for FY'25

Total Amount of Adjustments:

\$447,734



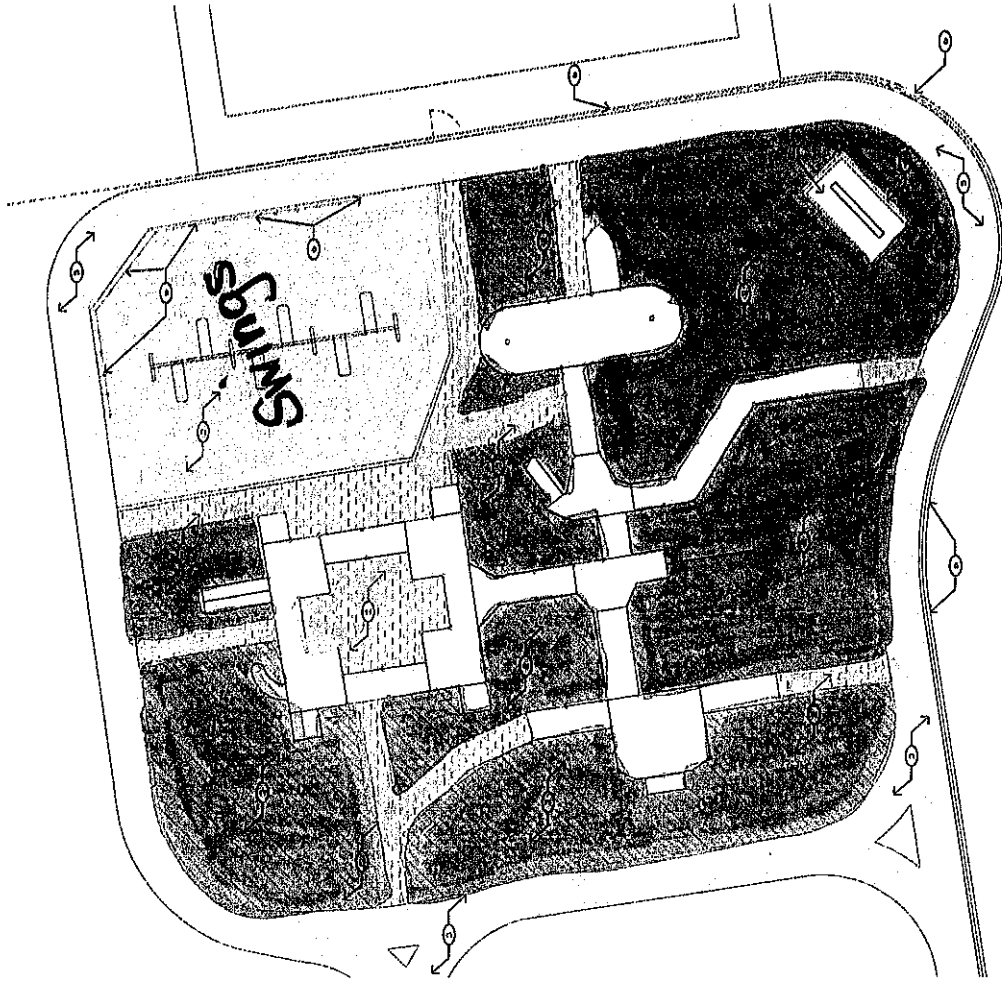
New Proposed Budget Request for FY25

\$24,702,183

5304H
Pewter Grey

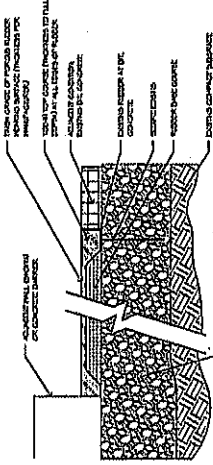
5318A
Sapphire Blue

5315A
Sky Blue

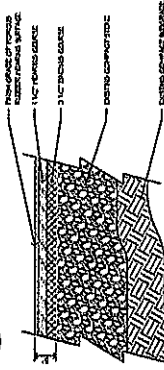


1 PLAYGROUND SITE PLAN
1/8"=1'-0"

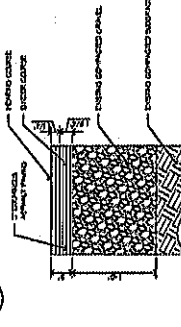
- GENERAL NOTES:**
1. ALL SURFACES SHALL BE INSTALLED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE AND SHALL BE COMPACTED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE. ALL SURFACES SHALL BE INSTALLED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE AND SHALL BE COMPACTED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE.
 2. ALL SURFACES SHALL BE INSTALLED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE AND SHALL BE COMPACTED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE.
 3. ALL SURFACES SHALL BE INSTALLED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE AND SHALL BE COMPACTED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE.
 4. ALL SURFACES SHALL BE INSTALLED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE AND SHALL BE COMPACTED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE.
 5. ALL SURFACES SHALL BE INSTALLED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE AND SHALL BE COMPACTED TO THE PROPOSED FINISH GRADE.



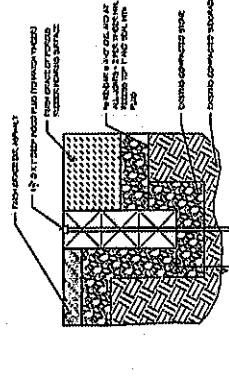
1 RUBBER SURFACE ADJACENT TO BIT. ASPHALT
1/2"=1'-0"



2 RUBBER SURFACE DEPTH CHANGE
1/2"=1'-0"



3 EXISTING STANDARD PAVING SECTION
1/2"=1'-0"



4 EXISTING TIMBER EDGE
1/2"=1'-0"

PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT
LEROY WOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
60 SCOTT BLVD. NICKSBORO
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22718



123 Washington Street, Falls Church, VA 22718
ROWSE
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
12345 Main Street
Falls Church, VA 22718
Tel: (703) 555-1234
Fax: (703) 555-5678
www.rowse.com

Date:	APRIL 1, 2023
Drawn by:	IM, Prol. Mec. pro.
Scale:	As Shown
No.:	
Date:	
Description:	

OVERALL SITE PLAN

A1.1