



Decas School Steering Committee

FEASIBILITY STUDY

Prepared for the Town of Wareham
10/19/2022

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Introduction

This report serves as the final work product for the Decas School Steering Committee researching the feasibility of converting the former Decas Elementary School on Main Street into a multi-generational community center to serve the needs of the town of Wareham. This report was compiled over a period of months starting in January of 2022 and ending with the delivery of the report to the Fall 2022 Town Meeting on October 24, 2022.

The Steering Committee worked hard to consider the realistic possibility of making Decas a community center and evaluated the scenarios to make it work. The Steering Committee hired an architectural group to perform a building analysis, developed a finance plan to fund the building, interviewed organizations who are interested in leasing space, and issued a survey to gauge community support and further solicit ideas.

The Steering Committee was made up of representatives from the town who volunteered their time and effort to answer these questions and come from varied and diverse backgrounds, each with their own interest and expertise in the project. With the delivery of this report, the Decas School Steering Committee fulfills their charge and disbands at the conclusion of the Fall Town Meeting.

HISTORY OF DECAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Decas Family

In 1968, William Decas donated \$40,000 to the town of Wareham toward construction of the new school. The family had already contributed funds to obtain the land. Wareham would go on to name the school after Decas' son, John W., who was killed during WWII at the Battle of the Bulge. William Decas believed wholeheartedly in the transformative nature of education. The oldest of ten brothers, he immigrated to the U.S. in 1905 from a small Greek village in search of greater opportunity. Decas learned English in the basement of a school in New Bedford, started out shining shoes at Hathaway Theater on Purchase Street and went on to be a successful entrepreneur in Wareham.

His family made repeated financial gifts to support students in Wareham. His daughter, Georgia Chamberlain, donated \$300,000 in 2003 to support Decas School—at the time, it was the largest single donation to a public school in MA.

Decas Elementary School

The John W. Decas Elementary School (Decas) was designed by the Hyannis based firm Alger and Gunn Architects and built in 1968. It was designed in the cape cod modernist style; this style has become a favorite of architectural preservationists over the last decade. Decas is one of a few modernist buildings that has been preserved in the Town of Wareham. Alger and Gunn designed an additional modernist building for Wareham, the

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fire station at 273 Main Street. Both Decas and the fire station feature the firm's trademark spire at the peak of the roof.

In 1974 a new classroom wing was added to the school, six years after Decas' original construction. As a testament to how well the original building functioned, Wareham again hired Alger and Gunn to design the addition. The design of the 1974 wing seamlessly blends in with the existing building.

The school's population continued to expand and in 1994, portable classrooms were moved from another location in Wareham and installed along the south-west side of the building. The portables connected to the main building by an angled corridor. The portables do not echo any design features of the original building nor the 1974 addition and have outlived their service lives.

Vacating The School

In 2018, the town determined that the existing Minot Forest Elementary was reaching the end of its useable lifetime and needed extensive renovations. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) was providing reimbursement to municipalities for construction of new school buildings, and it was determined that the town should construct a new elementary school on the site of the Minot Forest school that would consolidate Decas Elementary School and the soon to be former Minot Forest school into a single large school. The town voted to approve the financing plan and move forward with construction of the Wareham Elementary School.

As part of the consolidation plan, the Wareham School Committee voted to transfer ownership of the Decas Elementary School property to the town for sale, redevelopment, or further use and the town concurred, approving the property transfer at the Fall 2020 Town Meeting.

The Board of Selectmen commissioned a study by the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to research preparing and selling the property for redevelopment, which found that a high-tech laboratory or office park development would be the best private redevelopment option to serve the town. Notably, the SRPEDD study was limited only to researching redevelopment of the property and did not include any other municipal use. The Board of Selectmen voted to accept the SRPEDD report on redeveloping the property.

In the Summer and Fall of 2021, a group of citizens developed an idea to repurpose the property for a community center rather than selling the property and via petition were able to get an article on the warrant for the Fall 2021 Town Meeting to address the idea. The town voted to create a Decas School Steering Committee to research the possibility of using Decas as a community center and to provide a feasibility study to the town by the Fall 2022 Town Meeting.

THE DECAS SCHOOL STEERING COMMITTEE

The Decas School Steering Committee was created by town vote at the Fall 2021 Town Meeting to research the possibility of repurposing Decas as a community center and present a feasibility study to the town at the Fall 2022 Town Meeting. The Steering Committee was appropriated \$15,000 from free cash to perform a basic architectural suitability analysis of the building as part of the report.

The Steering Committee was comprised of four citizens from the original petitioning group, a Council on Aging representative, a Capital Planning representative, a Community Preservation Commission representative, a member appointed by the Board of Selectmen, and the Town Administrator and a Board of Selectmen member as non-voting liaisons. The Steering Committee was appointed in January of 2022 with a term to end with the conclusion of the Fall 2022 Town Meeting.

The Steering Committee met weekly throughout their term developing the feasibility study and refining the proposal for making Decas into a community center.

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

The Decas Community Center proposal is centered around the idea that Wareham needs a multi-generational community center that can serve as a place for citizens of all ages to find something rewarding and enriching to do throughout the year. The spacious and single-level floor plan of Decas lends itself well to the idea of an accessible and shareable building to host community functions and other activities.

The proposal is based on a few key points; the Council on Aging (CoA) would be relocated into the building, maker & art space/computer labs/networking spaces would be available for the community to use, the fields and playgrounds remain accessible to the town, and the cost of the building would be subsidized by leasing space to non-profit and social services organizations with the added benefit of being able to expand their portfolios of services to the town.

The Council on Aging is one of the centerpieces of the proposal. Currently the CoA operates out of the Multi-Service Center on Marion Road. The MSC is not ideal for CoA activities for reasons expanded on later in this report and the single level at Decas is a better fit for our seniors. The gymnasiums, kitchens, courtyard, and proximity to walking trails offer extensive options for the CoA to expand their programming than could be achieved at the MSC.

The inclusion of a maker & art space, computer labs, and coworking spaces offer the opportunity to learn critical 21st century skills that are in demand all over the world. Maker & Art Spaces would give the creative-minded in our town an outlet to develop and highlight their work while the computer labs could provide lessons ranging from basic computer skills to programming and repair lessons. The coworking space, which has

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been a highlight of the Baker administration in Massachusetts, would allow our small businesses and entrepreneurs a place to work, network with peers, and incubate the next big idea in Wareham.

The playground and fields at Decas have been and still are used daily by families in Wareham. The various athletic teams in town all use Decas fields for practices or games and the playgrounds are a safe and accessible option for families living in the area. Preserving these grounds are critically important to the health and enjoyment of our town.

Lastly, the Steering Committee understood the challenging financial condition of the town. While great strides have been made to right the fiscal ship, the town must still be careful about where it spends money. With that in mind, the Steering Committee researched the possibility of subsidizing the cost of the building by leasing out space. To maximize the benefit to the town, a focus was placed on non-profit and social services organizations who could use the space to expand their offerings to our town and do better for Wareham. The committee was able to develop a model that would allow the community center to operate at no cost to the town, generating some small excess revenue yearly to fund capital expenditures for repairs and upgrades.

Given these points, the Steering Committee has determined that Decas would be immediately feasible as a community center based on the analysis and work done over the past few months. The Decas Community Center would provide years of benefits to the town and give the town a crown jewel to be proud of for generations to come.

Financial Analysis

The first question the Steering Committee wanted to answer was whether an idea like this would be financially feasible. The financial analysis and example operational budget are the result of work determining what some comparable communities spend to operate their community centers and what kinds of income potential is there from such space. The results of the analysis show that the community center could be self-sustaining and generate a small yearly excess revenue for funding capital expenditures for upgrades and repairs.

ANALYSIS OF COSTS

Since the Decas property was previously a school, all the costs associated with running the building are available for review for past years. The chart below shows the estimated yearly budget for running the community center in Decas. These numbers came from Fiscal Year 2021 data from the Wareham Public Schools annual budget as actual costs for the property. These numbers were determined in conjunction with the Town Administrators office to ensure they are a realistic estimation of actual costs. A breakdown of each category is below the chart.

Budget Forecasts	
Heating	\$50,193.36
Electrical	\$47,633.63
Water	\$4,304.23
Sewer	\$13,667.18
Annual Safety Inspections	\$1,000.00
Trash Removal	\$2,000.00
Cleaning Services	\$30,000.00
Facilities Operation Manager	\$90,000.00 inclusive of benefits package
Building Maintenance Allowance	\$30,000.00
Expense Subtotal	\$397,616.81
Expense per square foot	\$5.23 per square foot

Figure 1 - Example Budget Forecast

Utilities

Utilities consist of the cost to provide utilities to the building. These include HVAC, electricity, internet service, and water/sewer costs. These dollar amounts represent actual cost to the school department to run Decas for Fiscal Year 2021 with a 15% increase to account for increases in utility costs since 2021.

Employees

The budget proposal includes a single dedicated municipal employee. The Facilities Manager would be responsible for day-to-day operation of the building and coordination with tenants, activity sponsors, and other parties. The Facilities Manager would be responsible for opening and closing the building and overseeing building maintenance and utilization. The Facilities Manager would be paid a yearly salary of \$75,000 with a projected additional benefits package of \$15,000 for a total cost of \$90,000. This is commensurate with compensation for this type of municipal employee.

Cleaning Services

This budget item is the projected cost to have a commercial cleaning company provide contracted cleaning services to the building. This will save the town from needing to staff additional maintenance positions or increasing the responsibilities of the already stretched thin existing staff. Cleaning services would be limited to the public areas and be performed three times per week. Cleaning of the rental spaces would be the responsibility of the tenant occupying that space. Commercial Cleaning services rates generally cost around \$0.50 per square foot and with the estimated public space area of the Decas Community Center being around 50,000 square feet, the yearly cost would be \$30,000.

Building Maintenance Allowance

This budget item is taken directly from the Wareham Public Schools budget for Fiscal Year 2021. While Decas School is in good shape, some maintenance and repairs will be inevitable. Setting an allotment aside will ensure proper care of the building to make the community center last. The architectural assessment found small repairs that would need to be made and these funds would allow for those repairs to occur,

Summary

The estimated yearly cost to run the community center is \$397,616.81. This amount represents a consideration of all the actual existing costs plus an adjustment that the school department paid along with the specific items that would be necessary to support the successful operation of the community center. The cost amount per square foot of building is \$5.23.

These numbers were compared against some towns located around the state to see how they compare. This analysis would indicate if the Steering Committee was severely

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over- or underestimating the costs. Our analysis found that a \$397,616.11 yearly budget is about the middle of operating costs. For example, the town of Lenox, MA operates their community center for a yearly cost of around \$390,000 on a total town budget of appx. \$21,000,000 yearly.

ANALYSIS OF INCOME POTENTIAL

As mentioned earlier, the Steering Committee was focused on developing a model that would minimize the financial impact to the town. Knowing that a \$400,000 line item in the town budget was unsustainable, the Steering Committee researched funding possibilities to generate revenue from the property. The key to the funding plan is to offer sections of the school for rentals, generating income to the town and offsetting the cost of the building.

While researching this idea, the Steering Committee found precedent in this model; the town of Dover, MA operated their community center in the same manner. The Caryl Community Center was established in an old school in town, and they leased out extra space to generate money. In fact, the Caryl Community Center generated enough income that the town was able to raise enough money to build a new community center.

Analysis of the floor plan indicated that the portable classrooms have outlived their useful lives and cannot be realistically offered and as such are excluded from rental offerings. The shape of Decas did allow for some neat division of area that would allow organizations to operate effectively in their space while not impacting the use of the building by the community.

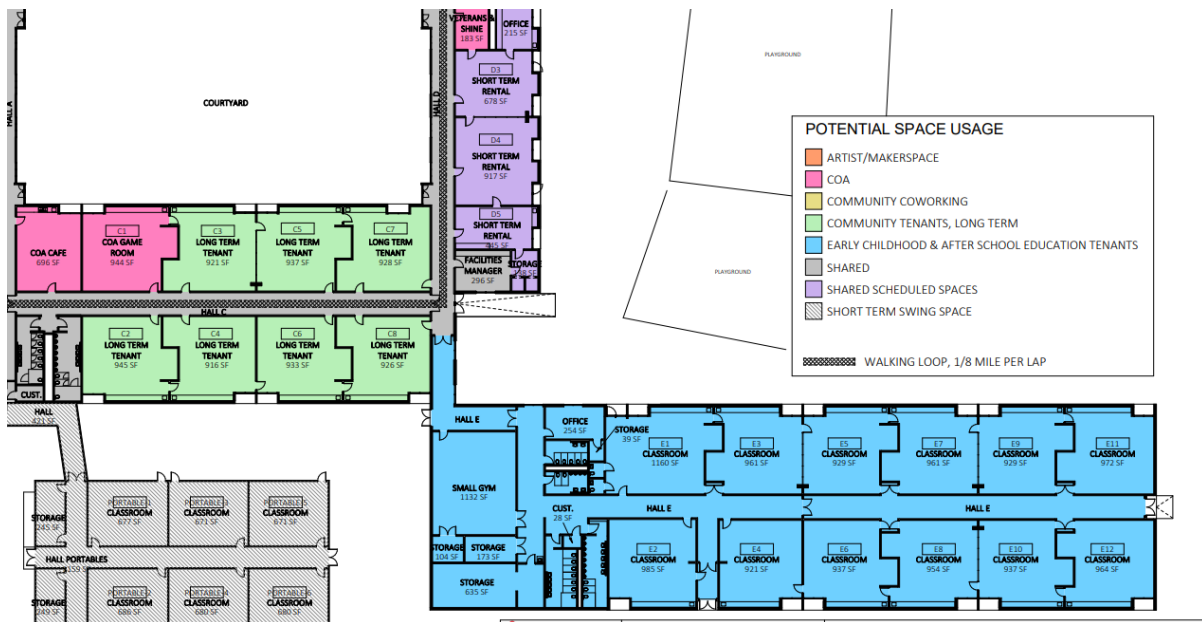


Figure 2 - Rental Section of the School

A total of around 27,000 square feet was identified as suitable for potential rental (light/dark green, and blue in figure 2). The light-green long-term rental units are intended for organizations who are interested in lease terms of a few years and/or would operate on a normal periodic business schedule. The dark-green short-term rental units

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are intended for organizations looking for short leases or who would operate on a part-time basis and potentially allow for room sharing. The blue early childhood/education section is intended for organizations that might need access control restrictions because of their programming. Critically, the Steering Committee received letters of interest from organizations interested in leasing space in all of these areas, those letters are discussed in the Interest section.

Using the 27,000 square feet as a basis, the Steering Committee analyzed local commercial property to determine a fair-market rate based on the size and amenities of the building. The full analysis is available in the next section. Studies revealed that commercial rental property rates vary from \$10 per square foot per year to \$20 per square foot per year depending on industry, location, and size. Given the condition, size, and amenities of the property, a fair market rate of \$16 per square foot per year was determined to be fair. The Steering Committee consulted with Jack Conway Realty Commercial in Boston, MA to double check the figure and was told it is a reasonable rate.

Income Forecasts	
Available Rental Space	Appx 27,000 square feet
Regional Average Commercial Rent Rate	\$16 per square foot per year
Income Potential (Rate X Sqft)	\$432,000 per year
Net Income	\$34,394

Figure 3- Income Forecast

Using the aforementioned numbers, utilizing all rental space would result in an income of \$432,000 per year. This would fully fund the community center while also allowing for a small net income to cover capital expenditures or other costs.

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The income forecast only represents what the Steering Committee could reasonably consider as regular enough to construct an effective budget. Rental income is more stable than other sources of income, but other sources were identified and researched. The Steering Committee decided to keep these other sources separate and **excluded from the operational budget forecasting** since by nature these other sources vary. Regardless, the Steering Committee did find that these sources are realistic, accessible to the town, and could be significant.

Other Sources	
Hourly Event Rentals	\$16,000
MassDevelopment Collaborative Workspaces Grant	\$25,000
Co-working Space Rental Income	\$36,000
Sustaining Business Memberships	\$20,000
Community Fundraising	\$50,000
Grants	\$25,000
Adult Education Program Course Fees	\$25,000
Grounds and Sports Field Rental Fees	\$5,000
Solar Canopy Lease	\$40,000

Figure 4- Potential Other Sources of Income

These additional sources of income would allow the community center to cover periods of <100% rental utilization, capital expenses, or rate subsidies for organizations.

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ANALYSIS

To determine a reasonable rate for commercial rental, the Committee performed some comparative commercial property analysis to see what the local market dictates for rents. The research was done using various listing services including local classifieds, LoopNet, Crexi, and other online services. At the time of writing, there were several properties for various industries that ranged from \$10 per square foot per year to over \$20 per square foot per year.

53 Marion Road, Wareham MA



Medical office building. Built 1950.

Listed April 2022 at \$17.50 per square foot per year

2667 Cranberry Highway, Wareham MA



1500sqft salon. Built 1967.

Listed April 2022 at \$15.96 per square foot per year

40 Church Cove, Wareham MA



Multiple office spaces. Built 1990.

Listed April 2022 at \$12.00 per square foot per year

258 Main Street, Bourne MA



Professional office complex, 2500sqft unit. Built 1983.

Listed April 2022 at \$18.00 per square foot per year

106 Main Street, Wareham MA



Medical office space. 1500-4437sqft available. Built 1906.

Listed September 2022 at \$18.00 per square foot per year.

Rosebrook Place, Wareham MA



General office space. Built 2015.

Listed September 2022 at \$21.00 per square foot per year.

2510 Cranberry Highway, Wareham MA



125sqft office space.

Listed September 2022 at \$12.00 per square foot per year.

72 Minot Ave, Wareham MA



1400sqft industrial space.

Listed September 2022 at \$9.50 per square foot per year.

2512 Cranberry Highway, Wareham MA



1674sqft retail property.

Listed September 2022 at \$25.00 per square foot per year.

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After completing the survey of local commercial properties available, the amenities were compared between those available at the Decas property and those available at the commercial properties found. Using these factors, a rate of **\$16 per square foot per year** was found to be a fair basis for rental income at the spaces earmarked at the Decas property. This rate compares favorably to what the town currently charges to the few organizations that currently rent space. Lastly, the proposal and rental rate was reviewed by a commercial realtor from Jack Conway Realty in Boston and was found to be a reasonable rate for commercial property.

PEER TOWN STUDIES

In order to better understand the operational, capital, and municipal impacts of the Community Center, the Steering Committee researched towns that have multi-generational community centers and how they are funded and operate. Three towns were analyzed and included in this report: Dover, MA, Chatham, MA, and Lenox, MA but there were other examples noted like Randolph, MA and Holyoke, MA.

Caryl Community Center, Dover, MA



The Caryl Community Center is currently located in the former elementary in Dover, MA. The Community Center hosted a few town offices, the Dover Council on Aging, and also provided some rental opportunities for both town residents and organizations.

Senior centers typically cobble together their funding from multiple sources and the concept for funding a community center at Decas is no exception. An interview with the Director of Parks & Recreation for Dover, MA provided a clear model. Dover’s Caryl Community Center is housed in a 40,000 sq ft former school building, repurposed after 90 years and was in worse condition than Decas when originally repurposed.

The building’s utilities and maintenance costs are 100% offset by rental income, derived from lease agreements with non-profits, community groups and small businesses, including a daycare, dance studio, cycling business and parent organization. Per hour rentals for events are also available. A significant number of MA community centers rent space to balance the budget; examples include Bourne, New Bedford, Randolph, Weston, Sharon, etc.

The CCC operates at a net income to the town of Dover using this model. In addition, there is a Friends of the Dover Council on Aging 501c3 organization which fundraises to support COA activity in the CCC. In terms of administration, the building, programming, and utilization of space (including CORI checks) are managed by the Director of Recreation & the COA Director and lease agreements are managed by the Town Administrator.

Dover reported no major problems using this model. In fact, the multigenerational programming was successful to the point that Town Meeting approved a significant renovation/rebuild for the center after 20 years using the school building.

Dover FY20 Town Budget: \$41,087,836.70

CCC Allocation: \$86,084.00

Chatham Community Center, Chatham MA



The Chatham Community Center operates out of the former elementary school at 702 Main Street, Chatham MA and hosts a wide variety of programs for all ages. The Center is open 7 days a week 8AM-9PM M-S and 1PM-5PM Sundays.

The PARK After-School program provides safe and affordable childcare for working families in Chatham. Financial aid for the program is available for qualified families and includes activities like field trips and movies.

The Center also hosts a fitness center and offers classes and sessions for pickleball, basketball, and soccer for both youth and adults. Space is also available for use by the community at a fee for events as requested.

Chatham FY20 Town Budget: \$49,471,472.48

Center Allocation: \$205,545.00 (total P&R expense line)

Lenox Community Center, Lenox, MA



The Lenox Community Center was built in 1921 by George E. Turnure as a community center in memory of his son who had been killed in WWI. The center hosts multi-generational activities including the Council on Aging, after-school programs, and summer sports camps.

Like most other community centers, it serves as the community hub for many organizations like the Boy Scouts, soccer and basketball clubs, and crafts clubs like woodworking and painting. Space is also available for resident use at a nominal fee.

The Council on Aging provides town seniors with varied activities including computer skills courses, mahjong, and vaccination/health clinics. Youth services include afterschool programs, playground/tennis/basketball/baseball/soccer, and seasonal events like Trick or Treat and Easter Egg hunts.

Lenox FY 20 Town Budget: \$20,811,999

Center Allocation: \$381,046

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INTEREST

The Steering Committee lacked statutory authority to issue any Request for Proposal to officially solicit potential bids in leasing space at the Decas school. This fact limited the ability of the Steering Committee to accept letters of interest from organizations that might be interested. The Steering Committee received seven letters from organizations including performing arts, early education, and sports teams:

1. Best Friends Learning Center
2. Gateway Creative Arts Center
3. Nemasket River Productions
4. South Shore Community Action Council (SSCAC)
5. Gateway ABA
6. Wareham Tiger Athletic Association

These letters represent good faith interest in renting space to be part of the center and all respondents were invited to the Steering Committee to describe their interest, needs, and proposal for their programs.

In the case of the SSCAC, the representatives expressed a desire to expand their offerings of Head Start classes and family assistance to a size that their current space could not accommodate. This would provide immense benefits to the town through after school and early education programs and social services for qualified families.

The letters are included as addendums to this report for review.

Architectural Analysis

As part of the warrant article that convened this committee, \$15,000 was allocated to perform an architectural analysis of the Decas property to determine the suitability of the building to being converted into a community center.

Working with the Town Administrator, the Steering Committee solicited a Request for Proposal for architectural services and received two bids: one from Jones Payne Architects, and one from Abacus Architects. The Steering Committee voted on March 12th, 2022 to accept the Jones Payne response and had the Town Administrator draft and execute the contract.

The final report was delivered to the Decas Steering Committee in August of 2022 and the summary is provided below. The full report is included as an addendum to this report for review.

BUILDING CONDITION

Exterior

General Condition

The exterior envelope of the building is in good shape. Below is a breakdown of the envelope and exterior components. Note that the portable classroom addition is listed as a separate line item.

Foundation

There do not appear to be any issues with the foundation.

Walls

Areas of the cedar shingle cladding have been replaced over time. There are areas that should be replaced as funding allows. There is a section of failing shingle near the playground where it appears people have been pulling shingles pieces off the building and tossing them onto the ground. We recommend this area be repaired first to stem any further vandalism.

Fenestration

The doors and windows are generally in good shape. One window on the E-wing has been vandalized and the glass will need to be repaired.

Roof

The roof over the E-wing was replaced in 2017 and is in great condition. The remaining areas of roof appear to be in good shape and should not require replacement in the foreseeable future.

Portable Classroom Wing

The portable classrooms were installed on the site in 1994. They were previously used elsewhere. The life expectancy of modular, portable classrooms is 20 years. The portables have outlived their useful lives and would require extensive renovation to be viable for reuse. We recommend removal of the portables.

Sidewalks

There are paved sidewalks surrounding portions of the building. Areas of concrete on these sidewalks and curbs have begun to spall and should be repaired as soon as is feasible.

Parking Lot

The parking was last paved when it was expanded in 2007 and is in good condition. Previous flooding issues have been mitigated. The accessible parking spaces are currently located along the face of the gym wall closest to the office entry. We recommend re-striping some of the closest additional spaces as accessible, due to the senior population that most often uses the building.

Fields

The existing fields consist of one baseball diamond and a series of grass fields that can be striped as required for other field sports such as the flag-football league that currently uses them. The fields have a functional irrigation system.

Playground

The playground equipment is of varying age. The northernmost equipment was installed in 2012, another grouping was installed between 2012 and 2015, and the newest equipment was installed in 2018. All equipment is in good shape and continues to be used by families visiting the property.

Interior

General Condition

The building interior is in very good condition for its age; the original construction materials have proven to be very durable.

Finishes

The ceilings in all of the spaces except the hallways are exposed cementitious wood fiber boards (A common brand name of this material is Tectum), which are the structural roof deck and serve to aide with acoustics in the rooms. These panels are supported by glue laminated timber beams. The glue laminated beams in the cafetorium are curved

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members that function as both columns and beams, a detail typical of mid-century modernist buildings. The hallways may have originally had the same exposed ceiling system, but now all have suspended acoustical ceiling tiles (ACT). The ACT is in good condition and the E-wing ACT was replaced in 2017. The ACT serves to hide infrastructure upgrades above [including] data cabling, sprinkler piping, etc.

The majority of the walls are painted concrete masonry units (CMU). Both the CMU and the paint finishes are in good condition. There is an area of relief CMU by the bus entrance, which is a decorative detail often found in mid-century modernist buildings. In the original construction, the only wall finishes that were gypsum wall board (GWB) were the enclosures above the coat room in each classroom. Minor areas of GWB have been added into the building over time in the main office and in the storage room in the D-wing. It is important to note that CMU is significantly more durable than GWB and is a major advantage that Decas has over other GWB, or plaster finished buildings. Some of the secondary classroom walls are finished in wood veneer paneling.

There are six operable partition walls that, when opened allow two classrooms to be combined into one larger room. Two of these are broken and should be either repaired or permanently left closed. All of the classrooms have metal casework on their exterior walls with a combination of full height and counter height cabinetry. Some of the casework is damaged but is repairable.

The majority of the flooring is vinyl composition tile (VCT). The VCT is generally in good shape, and some rooms have had new VCT installed in the last 10 years. There are damaged sections of VCT at the classroom doors where it appears lock down barricade locks have been removed. Classroom E2 also appears to have a slab moisture issue uplifting some VCT. It is suggested this be replaced once further investigation is carried out to determine the cause of the moisture. The storage closet in the E-wing appears to have sufficient overstock of VCT to complete these repairs.

The offices and teacher lounge have carpeting that is serviceable. The cafetorium has a sealed concrete floor; the concrete slab has some cracking that happened in the past but does not appear to be getting worse. The cracks should be filled in.

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

Even without air-conditioning, the building maintains a reasonable temperature over the summer months. Temperature sensors were deployed throughout the school during the late summer of 2022 when outside temperatures were well in the 90s. During this period, the hottest inside temperatures were in the mid-80s.

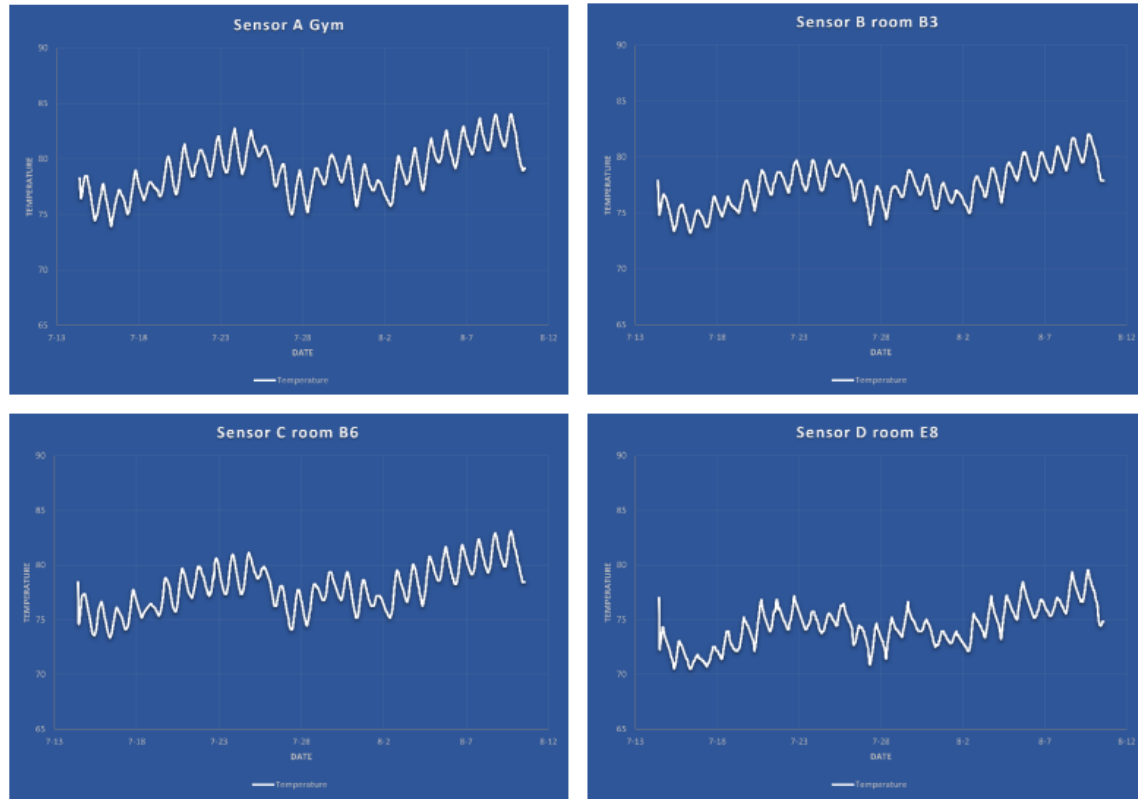


Figure 5 - Interior Temperatures During July-August 2022

Infrastructure

The scope of this feasibility study did not include mechanical or electrical engineering. Based on discussions JP had with Wareham and school district staff, the systems in the building are all fully functional.

The building has a fire sprinkler system as well as a kitchen fire suppression system. The kitchen system was upgraded in 2012 and the last inspection was completed in 2019. The electrical service appears to be in good condition and the automatic transfer switch that services the emergency generator appears to be new within the last 10 years. The generator was last serviced in 2020.

The building has central heat in the form of ductless unit ventilators in each classroom that are fed by three high-efficiency boilers that were installed in 2017. Records indicate that the new boilers only require 20% the amount of energy to run than the old boilers

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

did. The piping to the E-wing was replaced and two new hot water heaters that were also installed in 2017 for domestic hot water.

The gym and cafetorium spaces are served by air handlers with supply and return ducts. The plumbing system is functional; there is a sink in every classroom with an integral bubbler. The bubblers were covered/ taken out of service when drinking water tests showed unsafe levels of contaminants in the water. It is not clear if the contaminates still exist and if they are from building or town infrastructure.

The toilet rooms are functional, but none are 100% ADA/MAAB accessible, although the gang toilet rooms in the B, C, and E-wings are very close to meeting accessibility criteria.

The layout of Decas is ideally suited for reuse as a community center. There is an appropriate mix of mostly large rooms with some small rooms to accommodate the programming of a community center without adding any partition walls or reconfiguring spaces. The single floor layout of the building is appropriate for all ages and mobility levels.

Areas Of Work

The architectural study found upgrades and repairs that should be made to the property but would not prohibit the conversion of the building into a community center. The study laid out the work in a triaged short-term, medium-term, long-term proposed schedule including cost estimates for the work to be performed.

The short-term repairs include:

- *Repair the spalling concrete at the main parking lot accessible entrance walkways and railings, curbs at the bus loop.*
- *Repair vandalized glass in E-wing.*
- *Replace leaking toilet flush valve in E-wing toilet room.*

Probable construction bid cost opinion for this phase: \$63,000 (Cost opinion includes work done by a hired contractor and not Wareham; cost would be less if completed by Wareham maintenance staff)

Medium term upgrades are suggested to be completed on a 1–5-year project horizon:

- *Replace sections of cedar shingles on the exterior of the building.*
- *Re-stripe and re-sign additional parking spaces closest to the entries as accessible spaces to accommodate an increased load of building occupants who require these spaces.*
- *Demolish the portable classrooms.*

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

Probable construction bid cost opinion for this phase: \$188,000 (Cost opinion includes work done by a hired contractor and not Wareham; cost would be less if completed by Wareham maintenance staff)

Long term upgrades are suggested to be completed on a 5–10-year time horizon, or as funding allows:

- *Install central cooling to the building.*
 - *Wareham has engaged with an engineering firm to provide a conceptual cost for this upgrade. At the time this report is being written, this information has not been made available; therefore, it is not included in the probable cost opinion.*
- *Renovate the pair of toilet rooms adjacent to the main office and the pair adjacent to room D1/D2 to be fully accessible.*
- *Install a drop off loop west of the E-wing to serve the early childhood wing. This upgrade would be a tenant improvement and not carried in the probable cost opinion because it would be paid for by the tenant.*

Probable construction bid cost opinion for this phase, toilet rooms only: \$584,000

ROOM DATA SHEETS

The architectural study also includes a functional audit of each category of space in the building including furnishings and functions in line with the goals of the community center proposal. These sheets are used to assign space as things are moved into the property and to also coordinate phases for cleaning or repairs for each space. The room data sheets are below and also available in the full architectural report.

<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council on aging <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COA Director: private office for COA director. • COA Admin: Open desk area for administrative staff with customer waiting area • Nurse: Lorem ipsum • Outreach: Secure space where people can speak in private. The outreach Worker makes referrals for people to other agencies, helps prepare fuel assistance applications, food stamp applications and housing applications <p><u>FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT</u> <i>items in italics need to be acquired</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desks with task and visitors chairs • Waiting chairs • Patient beds 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing private offices • Co-locate all COA administrative functions • Easily found near main entry • Nurse with existing en-suite toilet, foot pedal sink, storage cabinets, privacy curtains. Proximity to vault for record storage • Room air conditioners present <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: Refinish steel cabinets in nurse room at areas of corrosion. Long-term: Add central cooling</p>								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; padding: 2px;">Area Data Sheet</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">COUNCIL ON AGING ADMINISTRATION SUITE</td> </tr> </table>		Area Data Sheet	COUNCIL ON AGING ADMINISTRATION SUITE						
Area Data Sheet	COUNCIL ON AGING ADMINISTRATION SUITE								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td rowspan="4" style="width: 20%; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"> <p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p> </td> <td style="width: 40%; padding: 2px;">Project Name: DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY</td> <td style="width: 40%; padding: 2px;">Sheet Number:</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Project No.: DCC 2201.00</td> <td rowspan="3" style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle; padding: 2px;">RD A4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Drawn By: NM</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Date Issued: AUGUST 31, 2022</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"</td> </tr> </table>		<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name: DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	Sheet Number:	Project No.: DCC 2201.00	RD A4	Drawn By: NM	Date Issued: AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"
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	Project No.: DCC 2201.00		RD A4						
	Drawn By: NM								
	Date Issued: AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"							

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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed use; COA, community groups, short term rentals. <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnasium functions; indoor sports, large gatherings. • Has been used for voting in the past <p><u>FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various sports equipment in storage room • Basketball hoops 	<p><u>SPACE BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily found near main entry • Directly adjacent to parking for large events • Door directly to exterior/parking • Northwestern exposure, protecting space from harshest summer sun • Insulated fiberglass glazing instead of glass <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms Medium-term: None Long-term: Add central cooling. Refinish flooring</p>
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Area Data Sheet	GYMNASIUM
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<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY		Sheet Number:	RD A7
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00			
	Drawn By:	NM			
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	1/16" = 1'-0"	

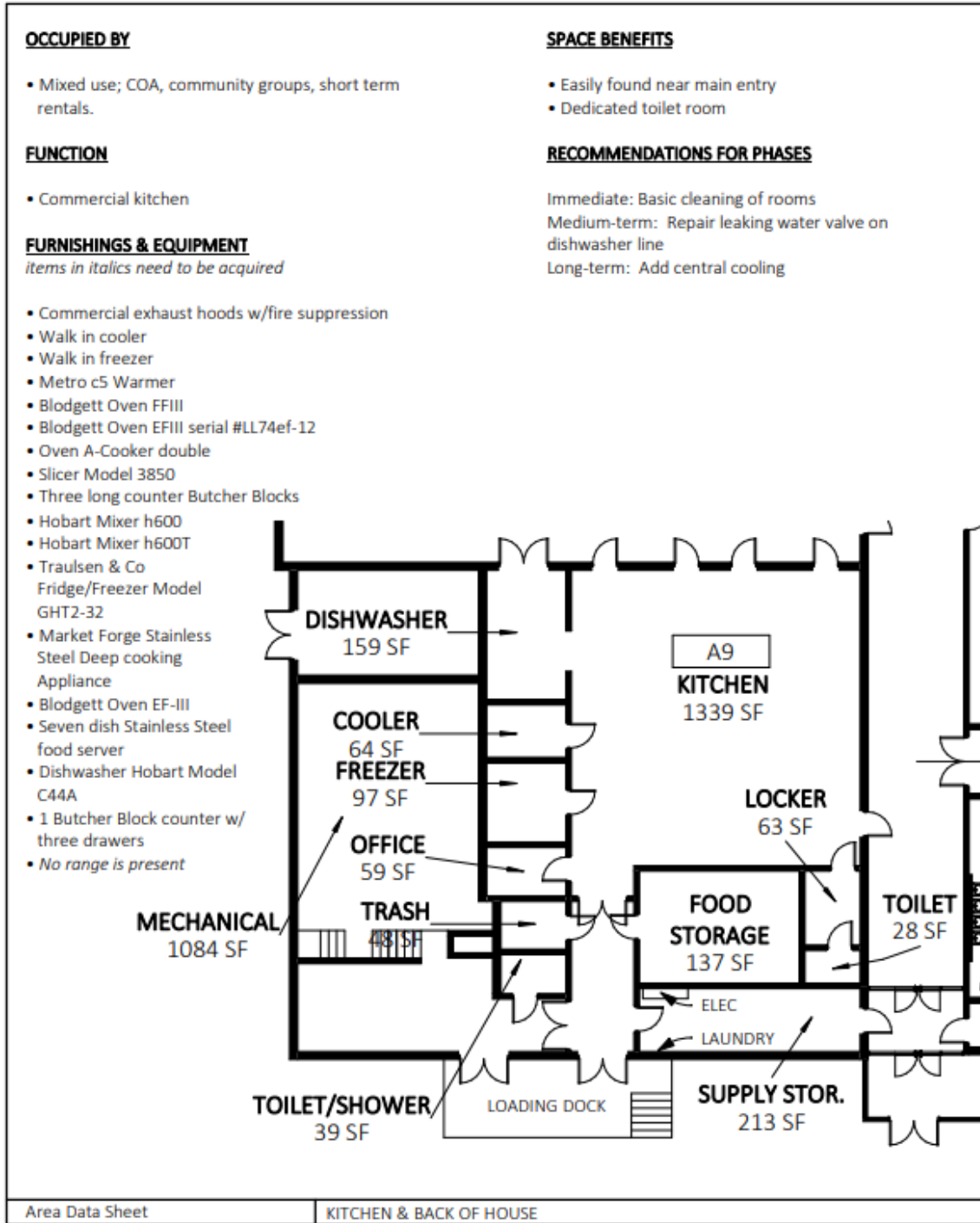
© copyright 2022

<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed use; COA, community groups, short term rentals. <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dining area • Performing arts/stage productions • Large gatherings <p><u>FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult size stacking chairs • Tables • Stage curtains 	<p><u>SPACE BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily found near main entry • Directly adjacent to parking and courtyard for large events • Door directly to exterior/parking • Northwestern exposure, protecting space from harshest summer sun • Insulated fiberglass glazing instead of glass <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms Medium-term: None Long-term: Add central cooling</p>

Area Data Sheet	CAFETORIUM
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<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name: DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	Sheet Number:	
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	<small>Project No.:</small> DCC 2201.00	RD A9
	<small>Drawn By:</small> NM	
	<small>Date Issued:</small> AUGUST 31, 2022	

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OCCUPIED BY

- Council on aging

FUNCTION

- A quiet space to use electronic devices
- At other times to be used to hold meetings

LOCATION BENEFITS

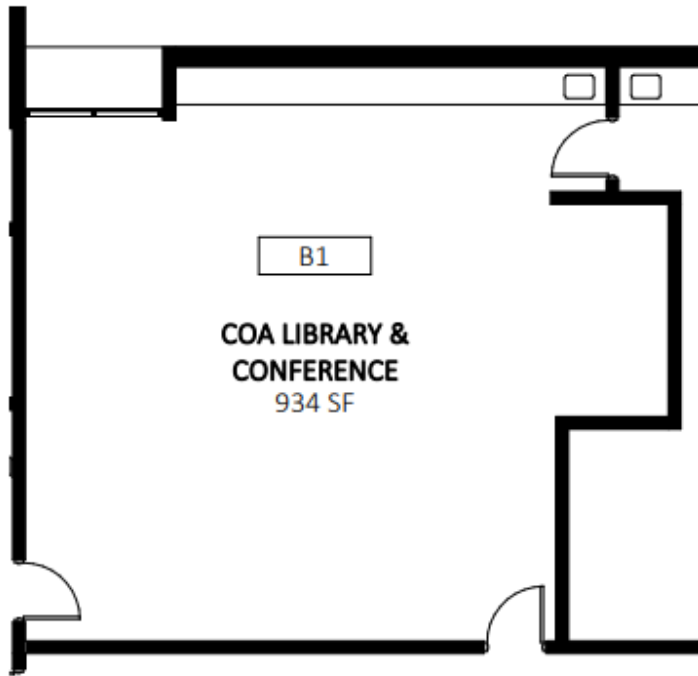
- Near the COA administration area, which is where people can check out electronic devices for use

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: Basic cleaning of room.

Medium-term: None.

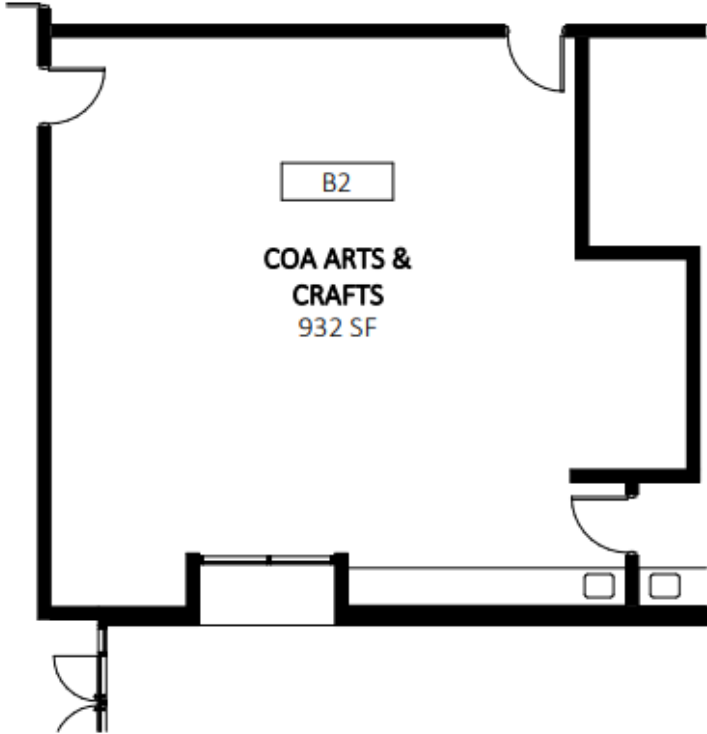
Long-term: None.



Area Data Sheet	COA LIBRARY & CONFERENCE
-----------------	--------------------------

 Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY			Sheet Number:
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00			RD B1
	Drawn By:	NM			
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	1/8" = 1'-0"	

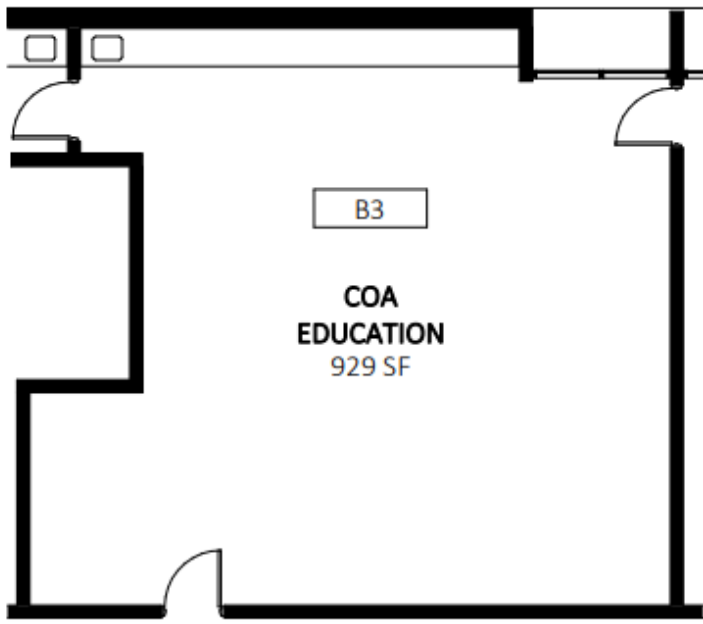
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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council On Aging <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space to create arts and crafts 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to Hall A for art display and overflow art events • Visibility to main entry for promotion of art events <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: None. Long-term: None.</p>
	
Area Data Sheet	COA ARTS & CRAFTS

 <p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	<small>Project Name:</small> DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	<small>Sheet Number:</small>
	<small>Project No.:</small> DCC 2201.00	RD B2
	<small>Drawn By:</small> NM	
	<small>Date Issued:</small> AUGUST 31, 2022	

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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council on Aging <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom for educational programming 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly adjacent to COA library for shared resources <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: None. Long-term: None.</p>
---	---



B3

**COA
EDUCATION
929 SF**

Area Data Sheet	COA EDUCATION
-----------------	---------------

 <p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name: DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	Sheet Number:	
	Project No.: DCC 2201.00		RD B3
	Drawn By: NM		
	Date Issued: AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"	

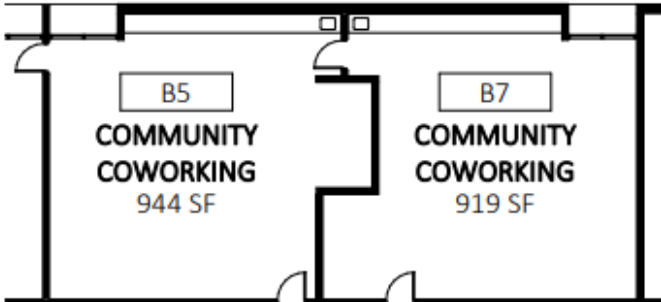
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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council On Aging <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houses the Supportive Day Program, from 9 - 3, which provides a safe, structured environment for seniors who are isolated, experiencing memory or personal loss, or have certain physical restrictions because of age related disabilities. This is a for fee program, and is self-sustaining 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two rooms can be kept separate or joined due to operable partition. • Windows open to the courtyard for more privacy. <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: None. Long-term: None.</p>
---	--

Area Data Sheet	COA ADULT DAYCARE
-----------------	-------------------

<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY		Sheet Number: RD B4
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00		
	Drawn By:	NM		
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	

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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coworking spaces are office environments shared by people who are self-employed, working for different employers, or startups. Physical resources are shared such as equipment and furniture, and the environment is intended to also facilitate networking, and the share of ideas and knowledge. Tenants typically rent workspace by the hour, day, or month. 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located in a quiet section of the building. Easy to find from the main entry. <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: None. Long-term: None.</p>		
			
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; padding: 2px;">Area Data Sheet</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">COMMUNITY COWORKING</td> </tr> </table>		Area Data Sheet	COMMUNITY COWORKING
Area Data Sheet	COMMUNITY COWORKING		

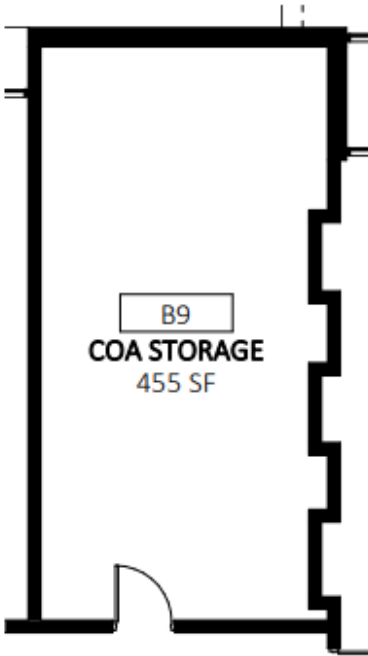
 <p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name: DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	Sheet Number:
	Project No.: DCC 2201.00	RD B5
	Drawn By: NM	
	Date Issued: AUGUST 31, 2022	


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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council On Aging <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosts regularly scheduled programs such as health and wellness programs. 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across from the Coworking spaces to help create chance encounters that could lead to collaboration. <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: None. Long-term: None.</p>
Area Data Sheet	COA SCHEDULED PROGRAMS

<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	<small>Project Name:</small> DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	<small>Sheet Number:</small>
	<small>Project No.:</small> DCC 2201.00	RD B8
	<small>Drawn By:</small> NM	
	<small>Date Issued:</small> AUGUST 31, 2022	

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<p><u>OCCUPIED BY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council On Aging <p><u>FUNCTION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage of items for the COA. Items can include durable medical equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs. 	<p><u>LOCATION BENEFITS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to covered entry for drop off of equipment • in COA B wing. <p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES</u></p> <p>Immediate: Basic cleaning of rooms. Medium-term: None. Long-term: None.</p>
	
Area Data Sheet	COA STORAGE

 <p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name: DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY	Sheet Number:	
	Project No.: DCC 2201.00	RD B9	
	Drawn By: NM		
	Date Issued: AUGUST 31, 2022		

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OCCUPIED BY

- Community members

FUNCTION

- Space to allow for exploration/creation of artistic and fabrication endeavours
- Large spaces that can hold a variety of tables & equipment with in room sinks. These spaces are available for work on creative projects. Makerspaces can host a variety of creative endeavours; everything from 3D printers, woodworking, painting, sewing, drawing, weaving, pottery.

FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT

items in italics need to be acquired

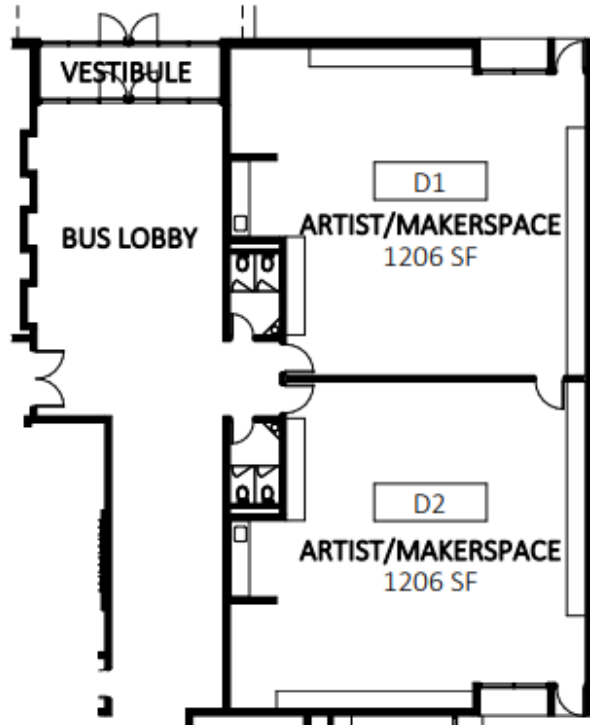
- Large tables/worksurfaces at a variety of heights
- Chairs at a variety of heights
- Tools, art supplies, 3D printers, computers


LOCATION BENEFITS

- Direct access to the outdoors for projects that might require outdoor work
- Proximity to bus lobby area for use to display art and have art events
- Good visibility within the building to encourage interaction.
- Visibility to a community entrance

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: Basic cleaning of room.
 Medium-term: Replace sink counters to accommodate ADA sinks.
 Long-term: None.



Area Data Sheet		ARTIST/MAKERSPACE		
 Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY		Sheet Number:
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00		RD D1
	Drawn By:	NM		
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	

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OCCUPIED BY

- Community members

FUNCTION

- Short term rental spaces in multiple size configurations. These can be rented for private events such as conferences, workshops, classes, and gatherings.

LOCATION BENEFITS

- Direct access to the outdoors where that might benefit a tenant. For instance sign ups for youth sports or child focused events who may want to use the play area.
- Close proximity to courtyard doors for combined indoor and outdoor events.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: Basic cleaning of room.
 Medium-term: None.
 Long-term: None.

Area Data Sheet	SHORT TERM RENTAL
-----------------	-------------------

<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY			Sheet Number:
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00			RD D2
	Drawn By:	NM			
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	1/16" = 1'-0"	

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OCCUPIED BY

- Veterans agent
- SHINE staff

FUNCTION

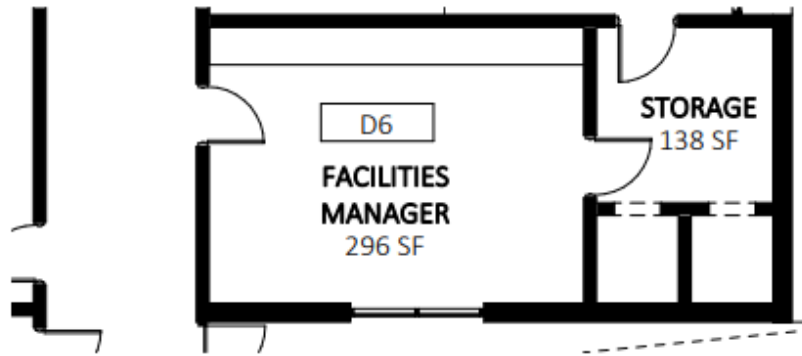
- Veteran Agent currently comes in one day a week to assist veterans.
- SHINE is Serving the Health Insurance Needs of the Elderly. This is a program that helps those who need it with health insurance and perscription plans.

LOCATION BENEFITS

- Ideally these offices would be co-located with the COA administration suite, however in an effort to reuse the existing building as-is, they are located in existing offices spaces in the D corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: Basic cleaning of room.
 Medium-term: None.
 Long-term: None.



Area Data Sheet	VETERANS & SHINE
-----------------	------------------

 Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY		Sheet Number:
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00		RD D6
	Drawn By:	NM		
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	

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OCCUPIED BY

- Community tenants

FUNCTION

- Long term rental spaces for a variety of community organizations.

LOCATION BENEFITS

- These spaces are located at the back of the building to be furthest away from any noisy activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: Basic cleaning of room.
 Medium-term: None.
 Long-term: None.

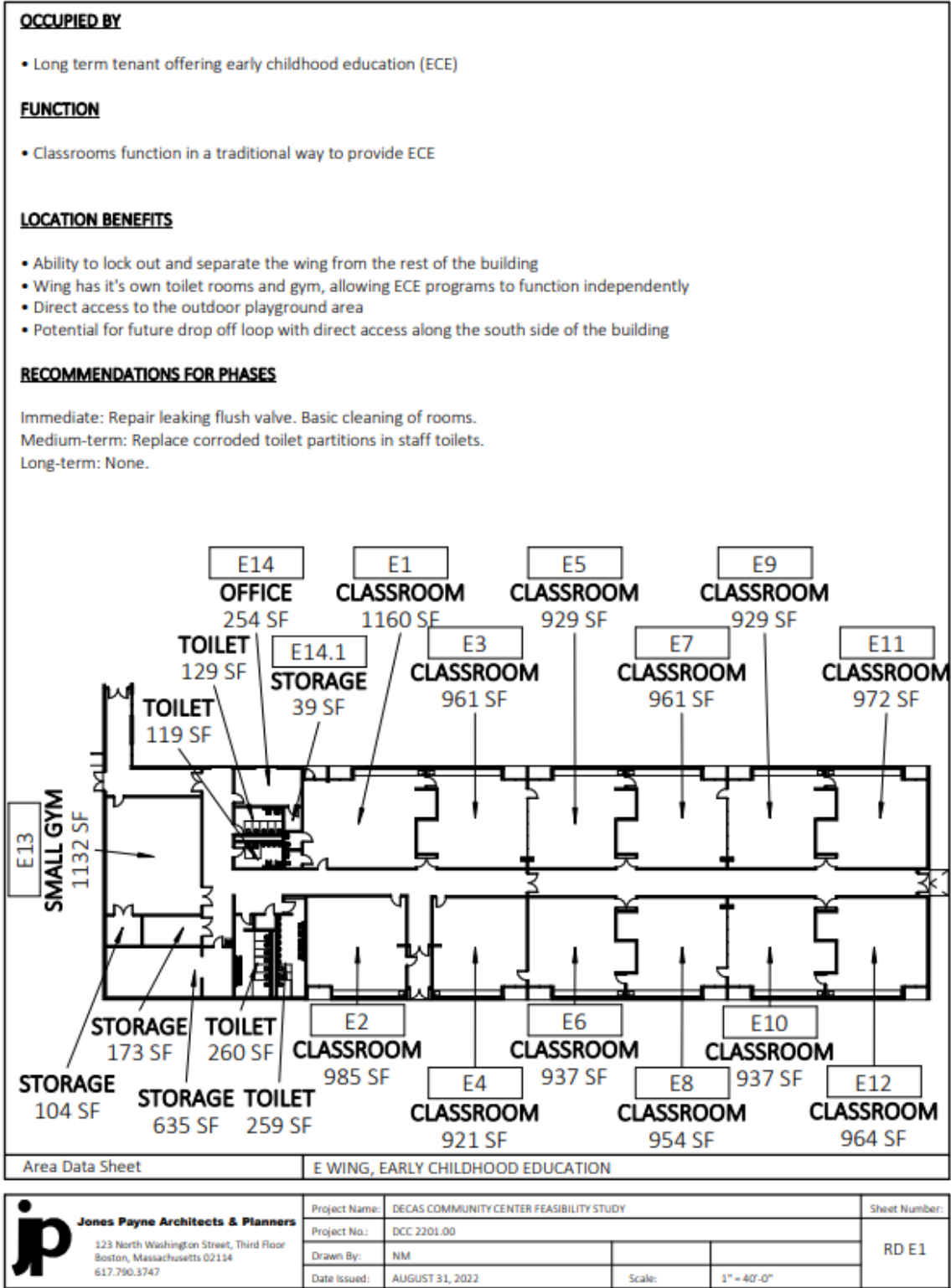
The diagram shows a floor plan of a building divided into two levels. Eight long-term tenant spaces are identified with callouts and labels:

- C3**: LONG TERM TENANT, 921 SF
- C5**: LONG TERM TENANT, 937 SF
- C7**: LONG TERM TENANT, 928 SF
- C2**: LONG TERM TENANT, 945 SF
- C4**: LONG TERM TENANT, 916 SF
- C6**: LONG TERM TENANT, 933 SF
- C8**: LONG TERM TENANT, 926 SF

Area Data Sheet	LONG TERM COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION TENANTS
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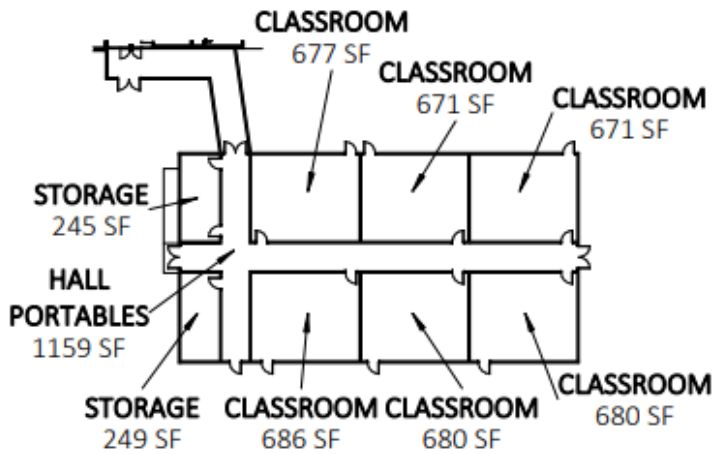
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	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00		RD D7
	Drawn By:	NM		
	Date Issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: The portable modular classroom units have exceeded their useful life and we recommend they be removed or demolished.



Area Data Sheet

PORTABLES

 Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY		Sheet Number:
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00		RD PB
	Drawn By:	NM		
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- Used by all building occupants; the fixtures are all mounted at adult heights.

LOCATION BENEFITS

- Each wing has it's own pair of toilet rooms; there are additional teachers toilet rooms next to the main entry, bus entry, and E wing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHASES

Immediate: Basic cleaning of room, replace leaking flush valve in the E wing

Medium-term: None.

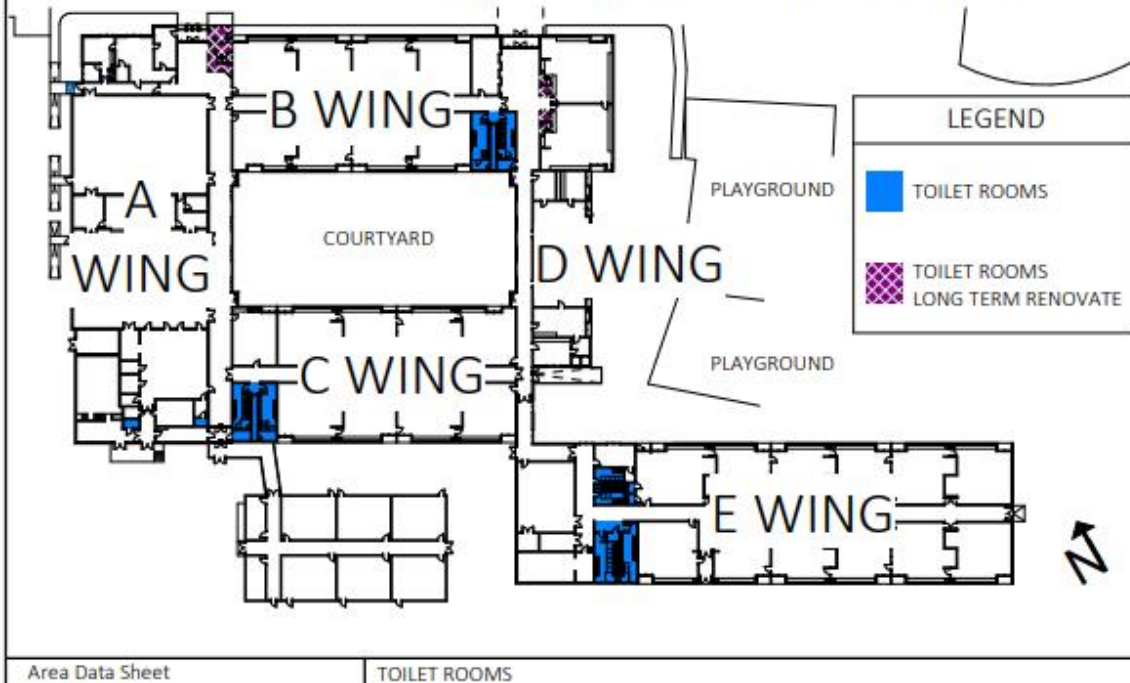
Long-term: The existing gang toilet rooms have been converted to be more accessible and are close to meeting ADA/MAAB dimensional requirements. Long term the pairs of toilet rooms next to the two entries should be renovated into pairs of single user fully ADA/MAAB compliant toilet rooms.



TYPICAL ACCESSIBLE STALL



TYPICAL GANG TOILET ROOM



Area Data Sheet	TOILET ROOMS
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<p>Jones Payne Architects & Planners 123 North Washington Street, Third Floor Boston, Massachusetts 02114 617.790.3747</p>	Project Name:	DECAS COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY		Sheet Number:
	Project No.:	DCC 2201.00		RD TR
	Drawn By:	NM		
	Date issued:	AUGUST 31, 2022	Scale:	

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FLOOR PLAN & PROPERTY MAP

The architectural firm developed a floor plan based on input from the Steering Committee to reflect the ideas of dedicated CoA space with rooms for community activities and rental space. A property map was also developed to highlight spaces for pickleball courts and the proposed bus loop.



Figure 7 - Upgrade/Repair Phases



Figure 8 - Property Map

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

BUILDING REPLACEMENT COST

To help understand the cost of building something like Decas in 2022, the Steering Committee tasked Jones Payne with determining an estimate of what it would cost. The finds are presented below:

JP was asked to provide the cost of building a new community center to house all the functions being proposed for Decas. The breakdown below shows the different programmed spaces and their total areas. The probable cost per square foot JP is using is our opinion on the current construction hard cost bid climate for public projects in Massachusetts, plus all the soft costs for items such as design, project management, and contingencies. We are carrying a range of \$1,040 to \$1,200 per square foot for total project cost. This does not include the cost of any land purchase.

Cost breakdown by space programming square footage:

		<i>Cost Range</i>	
		<i>\$1,040/sf</i>	<i>\$1,200/sf</i>
• Artist/Makerspace	2,413	\$2,509,520	\$2,895,600
• Council on Aging	9,325	\$9,698,000	\$11,190,000
• Community Co-working	1,864	\$1,938,560	\$2,236,800
• Early Childhood & After School Education Tenants	18,245	\$18,974,800	\$21,894,000
• Community Tenants, Long Term	6,506	\$6,766,240	\$7,807,200
• Shared (toilets, utility, hallways, etc.)	11,991	\$12,470,640	\$14,389,200
• Shared Scheduled Spaces & Short Term Rental (gym, cafetorium, kitchen, etc.)	12,163	\$12,649,520	\$14,595,600
	Total building square footage (sf):	62,507	
TOTAL PROBABLE COST RANGE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION:		\$65,007,280 TO \$75,008,400	

Figure 9 - Costs for New Construction

The table illustrates that building a facility for just the Council on Aging to match what is currently available at Decas would cost between \$9 and \$10MM. Decas could house the CoA with room for lots of other activities and services for the town. Using Decas instead of building new is a significant savings for the town.

Community Survey

To determine where the town stood on the proposal to convert Decas into a community center, the Steering Committee voted to run an open survey via the Town Website during June and July 2022. Responses were gathered via the website and paper responses during that time and compiled into this report. The intent of the survey was to answer a few questions:

1. Does the community support the Decas Community Center proposal?
2. Does the community understand how the funding model operates?
3. What services and activities would the community use at a community center?
4. What sort of social needs would the community center impact?

The Steering Committee received 354 responses, 352 via the website and 2 via a printed response. The analysis of the results is provided in the next sections.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

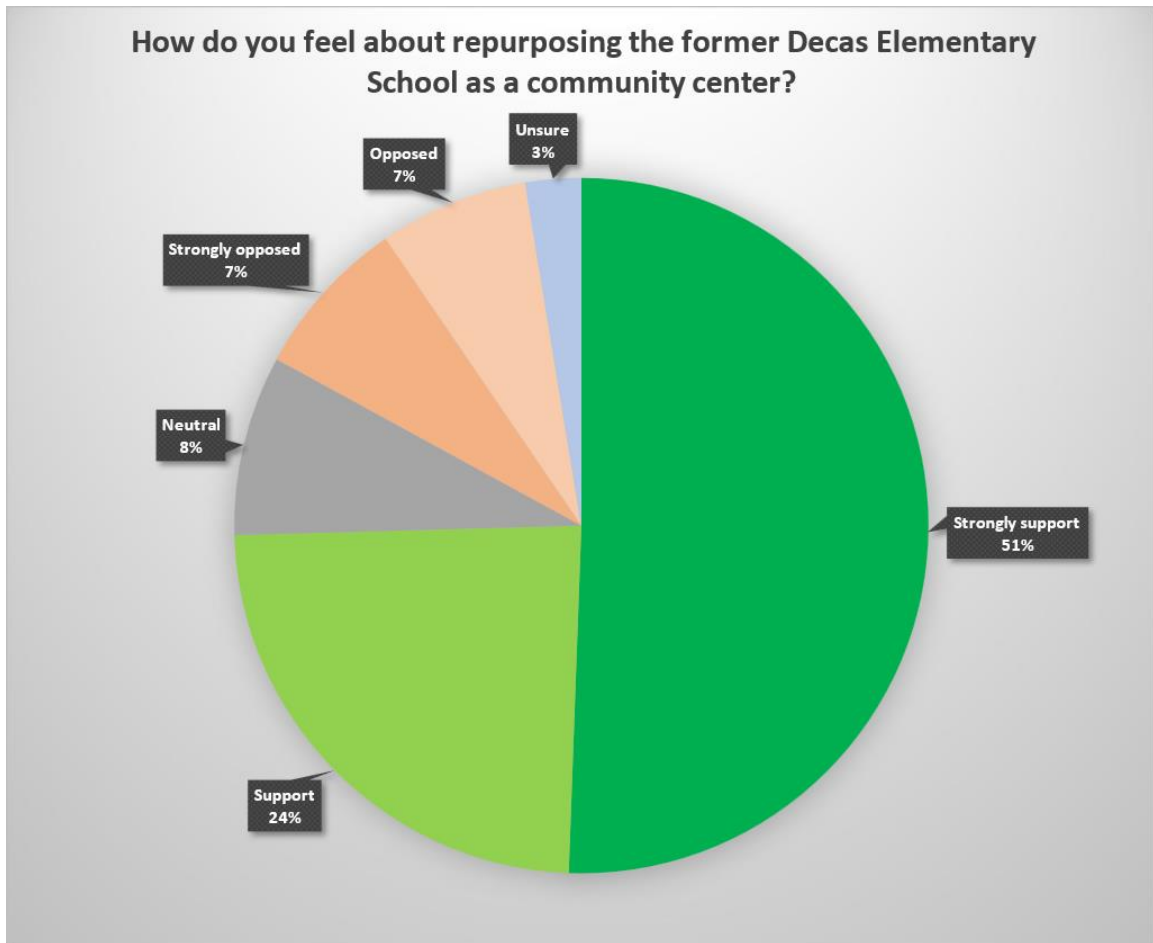


Figure 10 - Overall Support

The responses were overwhelmingly supportive. 51% of respondents strongly supported the proposal and 24% supported it totaling 75% in some measure of support of the proposal.

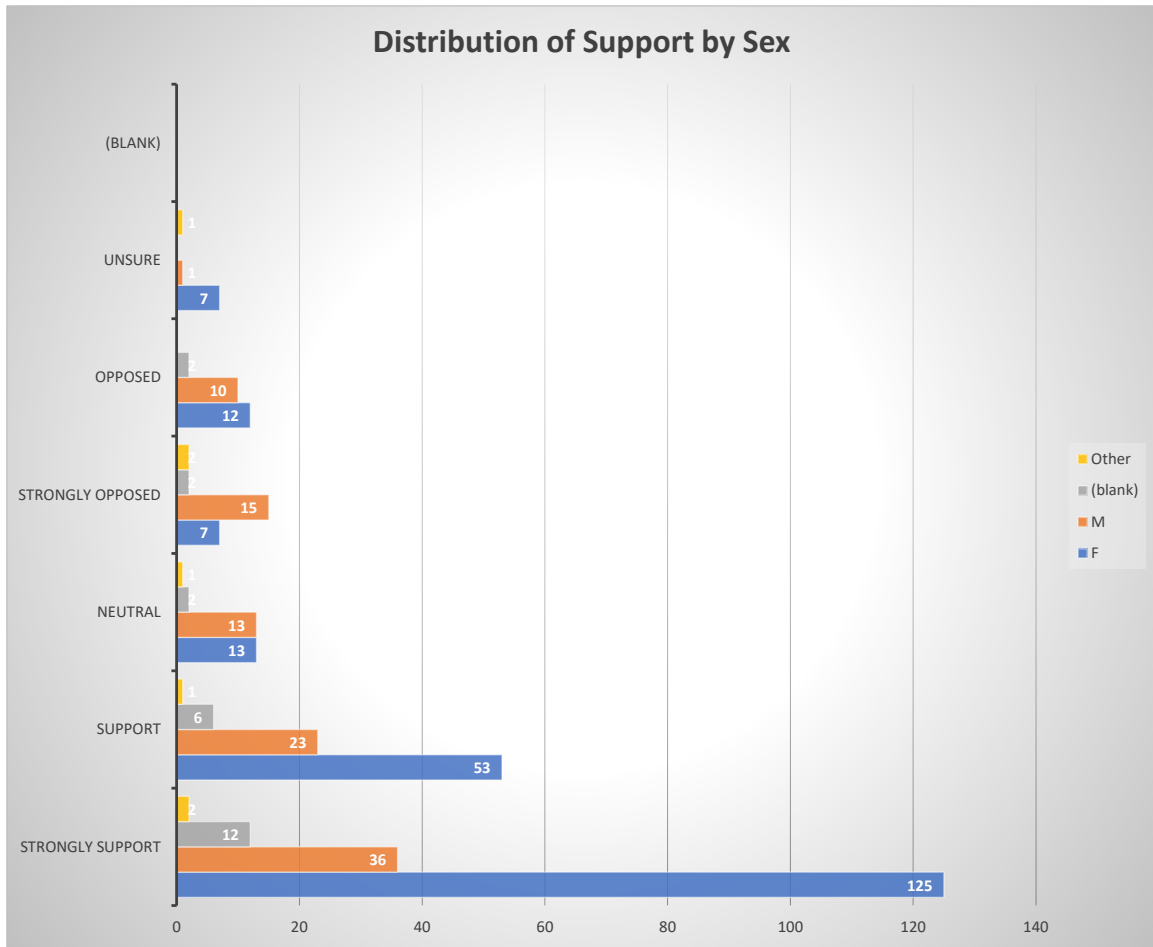


Figure 11 - Breakdown of Support by Sex

The responses indicated that women are much more supportive of the proposal although men were more likely to be strongly opposed to the community center.

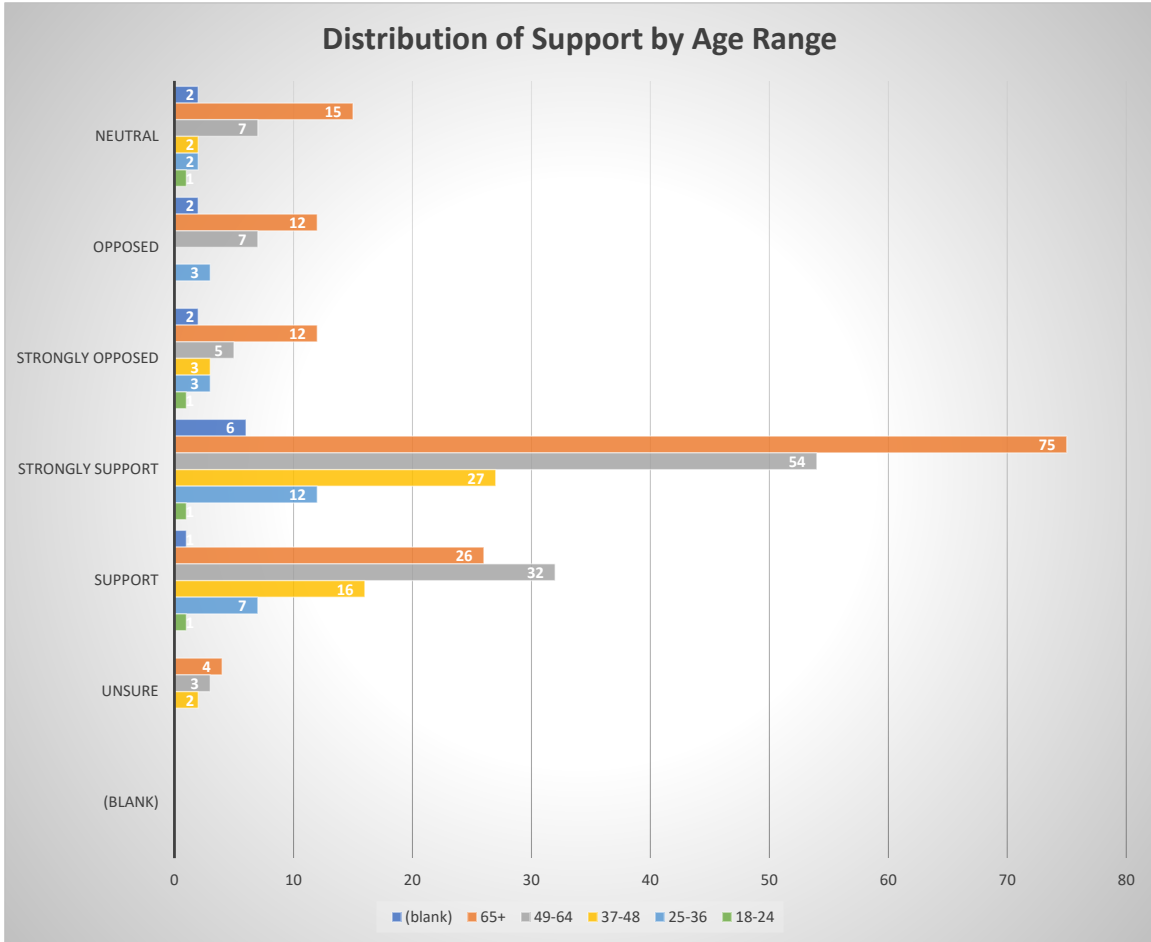


Figure 12 - Breakdown of Support by Age Range

Support for the community center was strongest in the 65+ age group with 49-64 not far behind. This is likely due to the expansion of the Council of Aging portfolio in the Decas proposal.

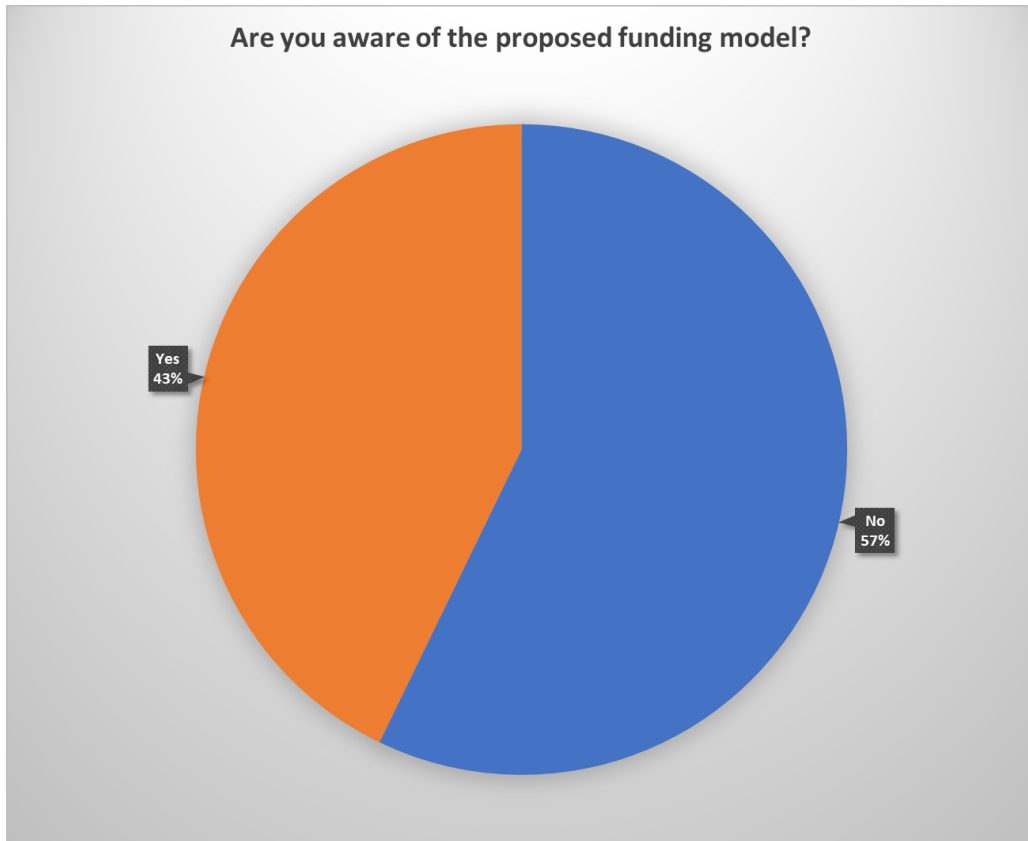


Figure 13 - Awareness of Funding Model

The majority of respondents were unaware of how the funding model was being proposed for the community center.

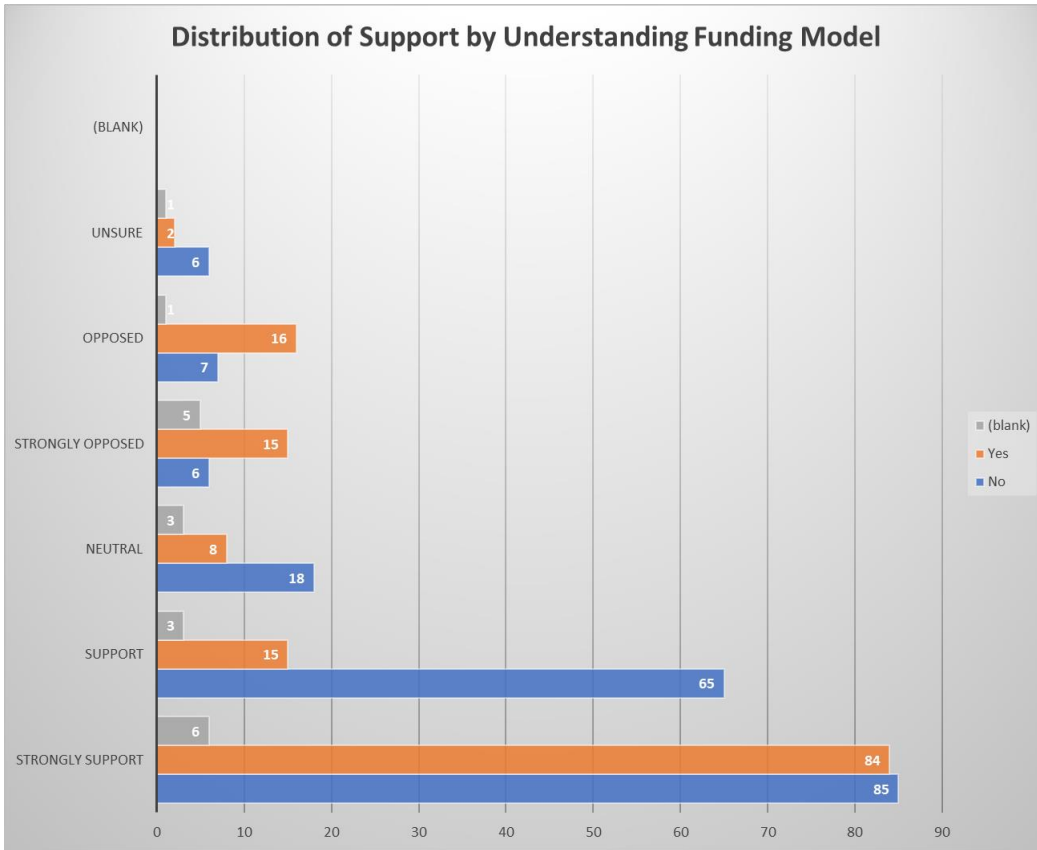


Figure 14 - Breakdown of Support by Understanding Model

The responses indicated that respondents supported the community center regardless of whether they understood how the funding model was being proposed. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the respondents want a varied and accessible community center regardless of how it is funded.

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES BREAKDOWN

The survey asked participants to select what sort of things they would like to do at a community center through a list of options.

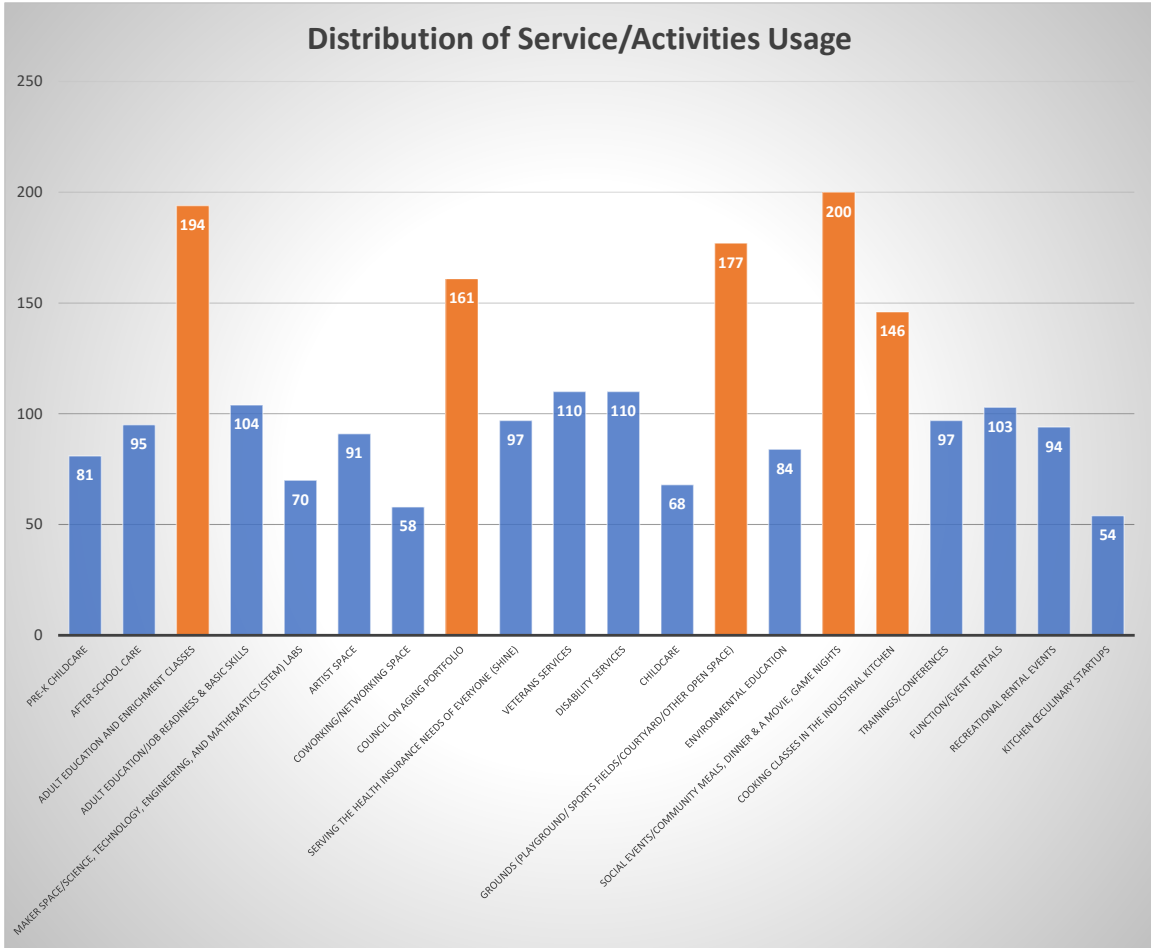


Figure 15 - Distribution of Services/Activities

The most popular activities overall selected by the respondents was adult education, Council on Aging portfolio, the grounds/playground, social events, and cooking classes.

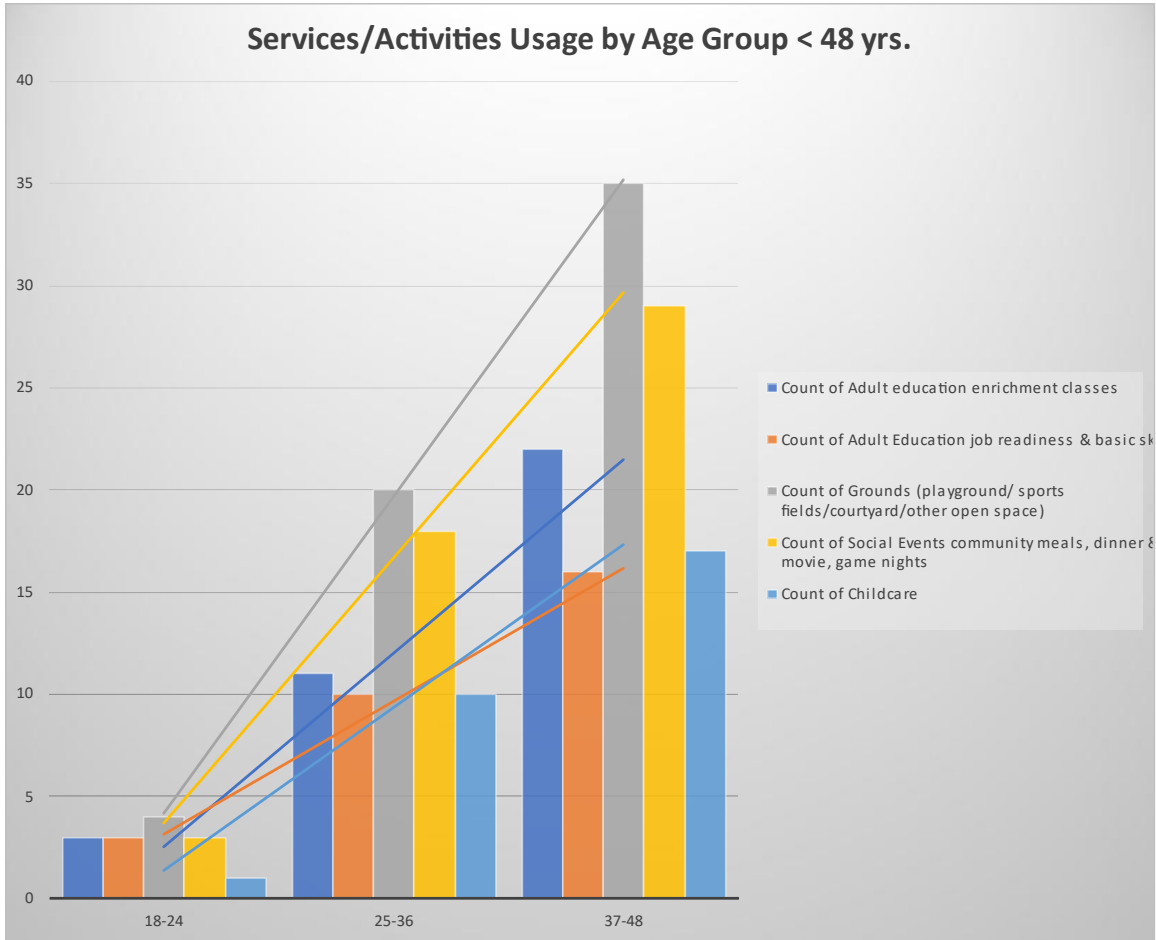


Figure 16 - Services/Activities Usage by Age Group < 48 yrs.

When the activities were considered via age groups some interesting trends came to light. Several activities grew in popularity as age increased. Adult ed, grounds, social events, and childcare grew substantially from the youngest to middle age group. This indicates that as Wareham families age and have children, the desire for family activities increases along with the demand for childcare in town.

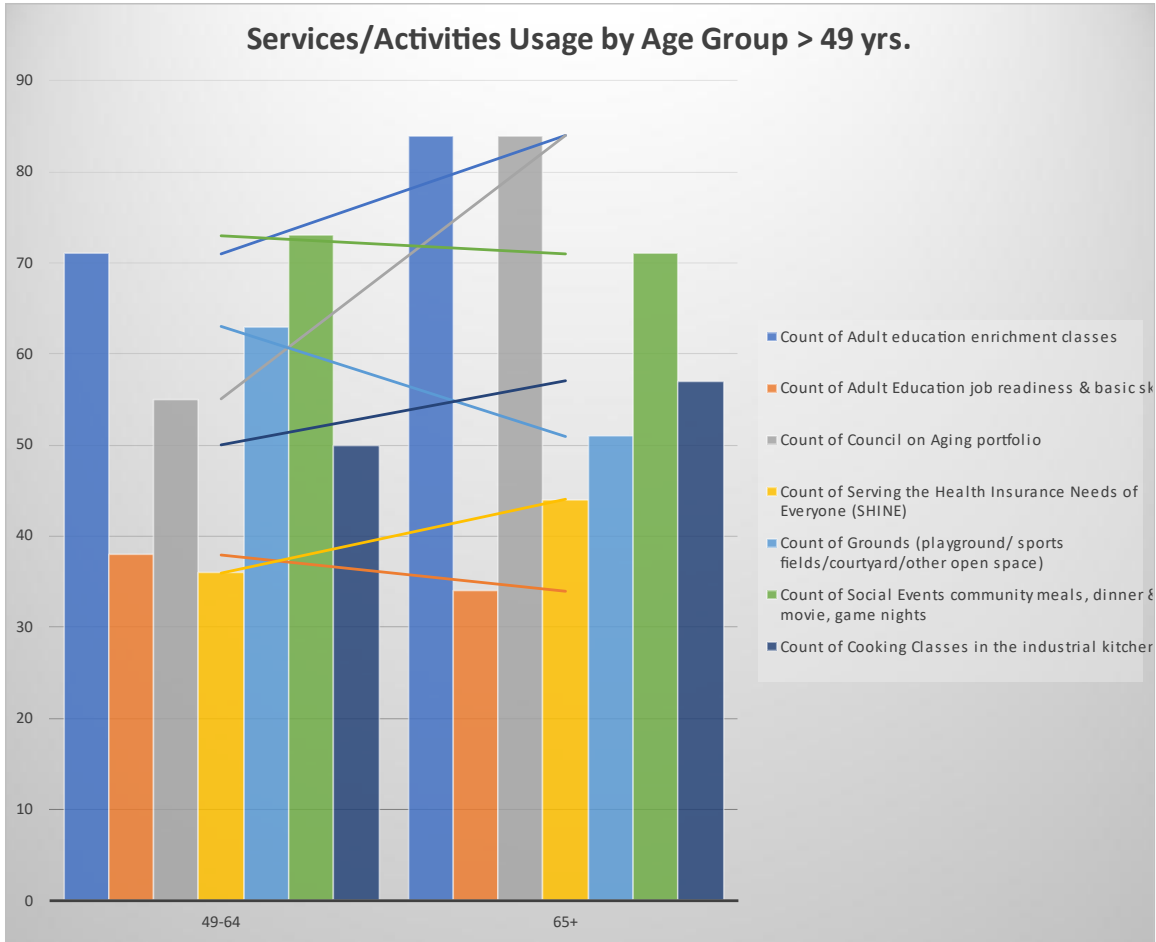


Figure 17 - Services/Activities Usage by Age Group > 49 yrs.

For the two top age brackets, the need for grounds and social events decreased but the Council on Aging portfolio demand increased. This indicates that Wareham seniors need a supportive and accessible Council on Aging operation as they age.

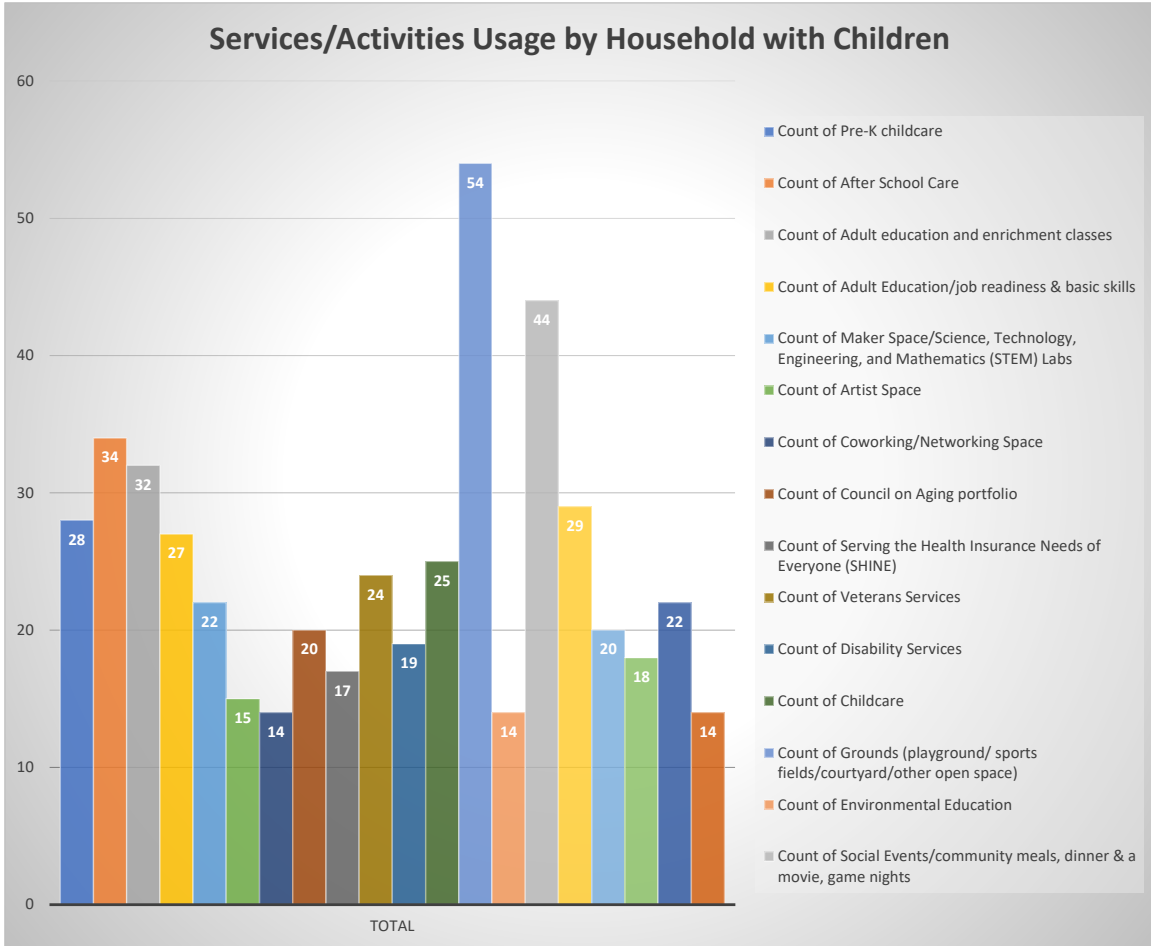


Figure 18 - Households with Children

For Wareham homes with children, grounds, after-school care, adult ed, and social events were the most popular services. Wareham families want to learn, work, and play at a Decas Community Center.

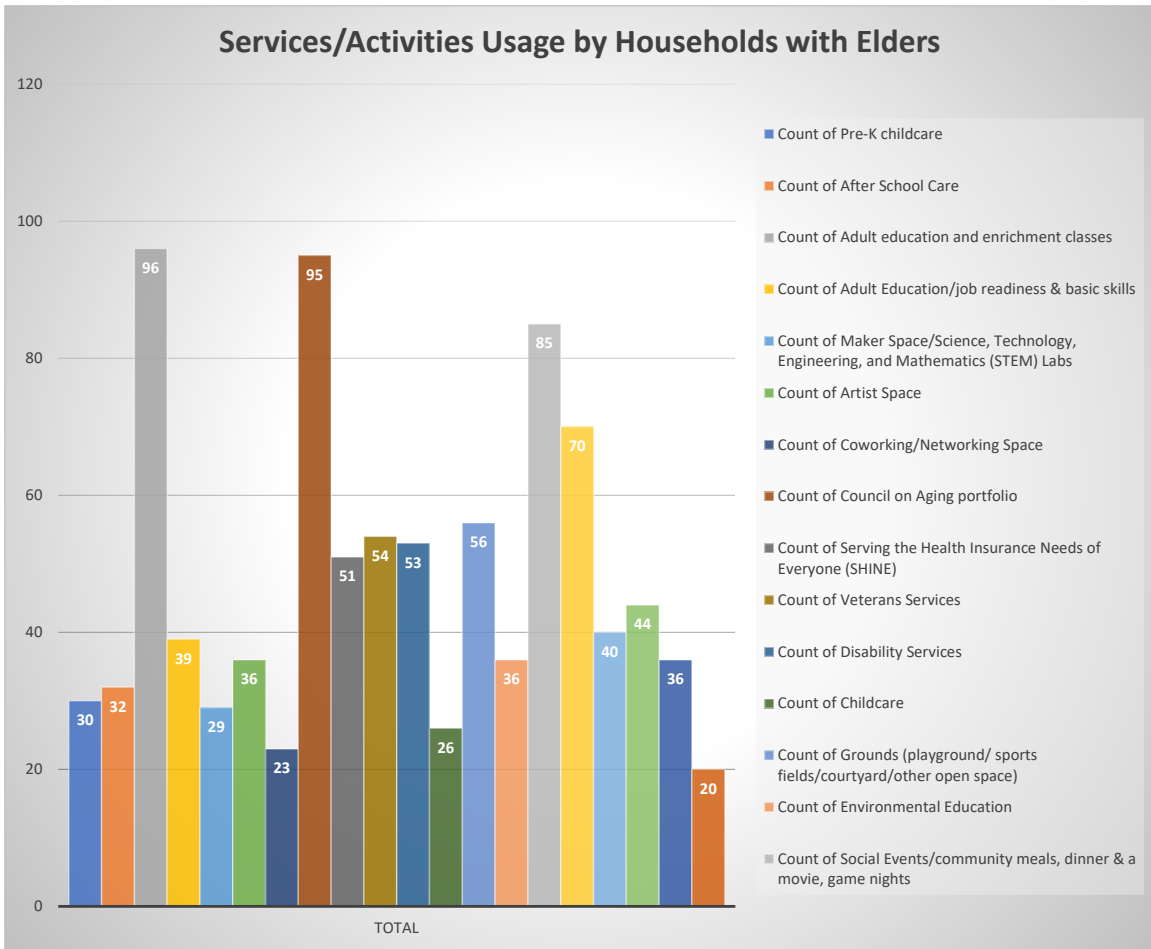


Figure 19 - Households with Elders

For Wareham homes with seniors, adult ed, CoA, SHINE, and VA Services are the most popular. Wareham Seniors want access to activities that are rewarding and help them thrive.

Interestingly when controlling for most characteristics, adult education was one of the most popular options regardless of age. The offering of computer classes, art classes, and other adult education options would directly meet the needs of these residents at the Decas Community Center.

SOCIAL NEEDS

The survey also included an anonymous and completely optional section where respondents could provide some socio-economic information to help identify gaps and needs for town residents. While not everyone filled out these questions, there were enough responses to build an understanding of where the town fits in social needs.

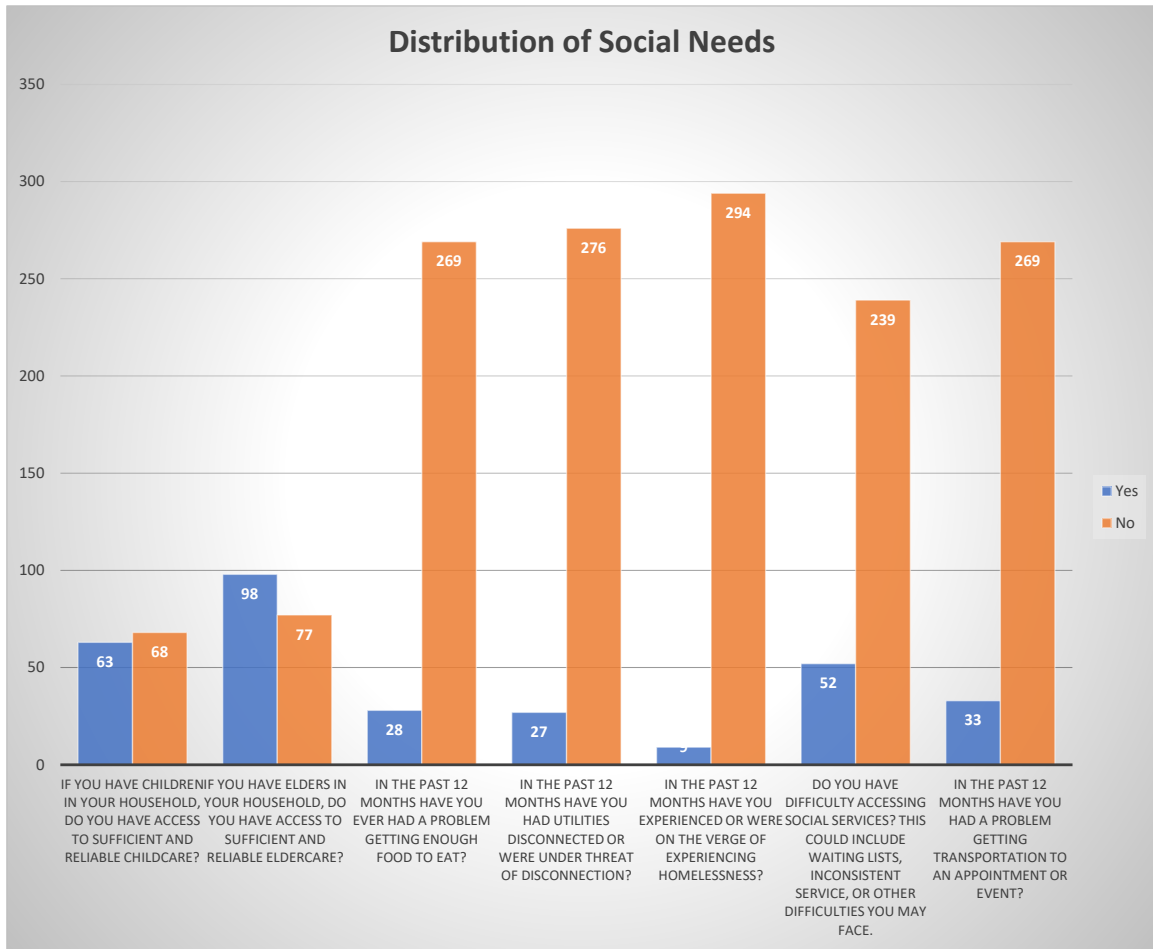


Figure 20 - Social Needs in Wareham

Respondents indicated that they did not have access to sufficient and reliable childcare in town and only slightly more indicated that they did have access to sufficient and reliable eldercare in town. Some of the options in the Decas Community Center would directly address these needs like the expansion of Council on Aging activities and the early education/after school programs proposed.

Additionally, while most respondents did not indicate food or housing insecurity, there were some affirmative responses to those questions. Some of the letters of interest received by the Steering Committee indicated that these organizations could expand those support services if they had the room, the kitchen at Decas could be used for meal preparation for needy families for example.

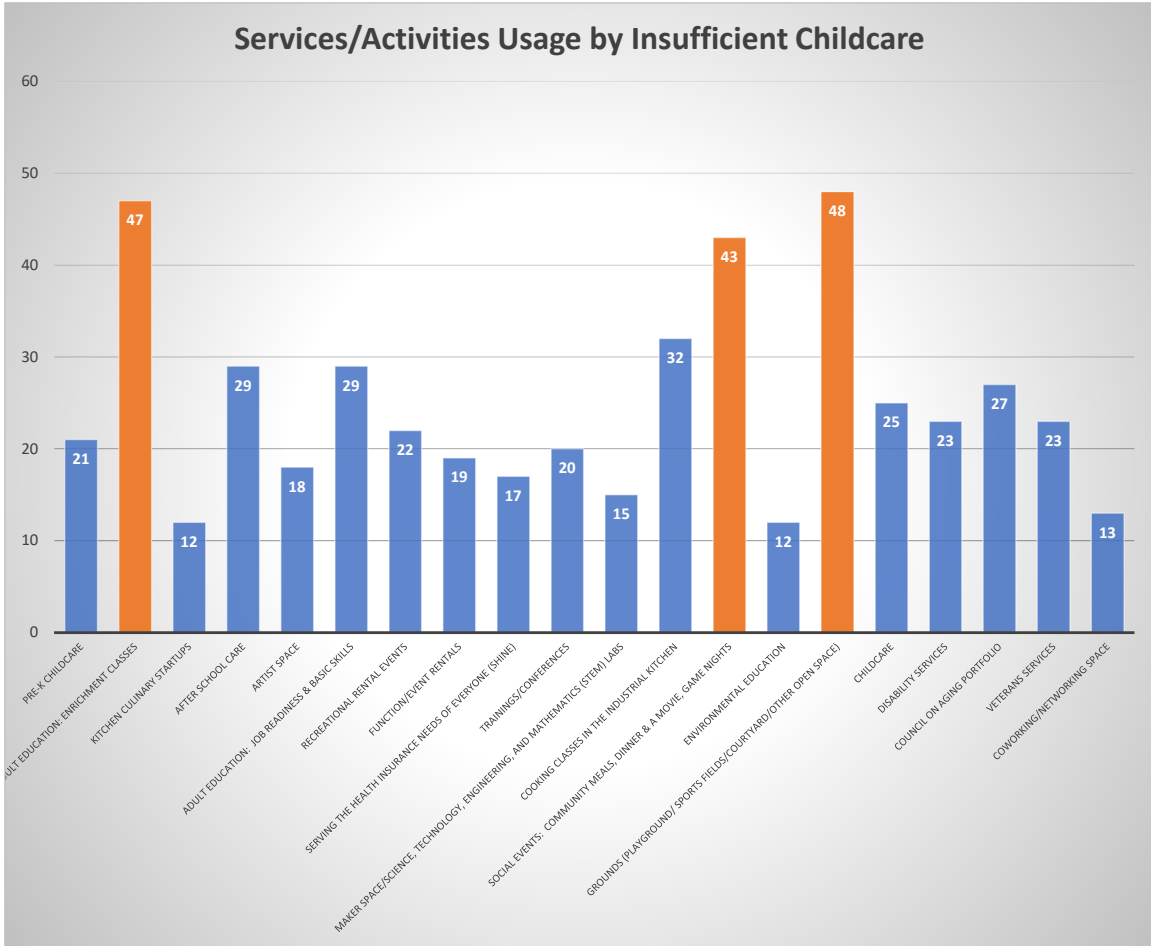


Figure 21 - Services/Activities for Insufficient Childcare

For respondents that indicated insufficient childcare, social events, grounds, and adult ed were the most popular activities. This indicates that Wareham families want to learn new skills and enjoy their community as a family.

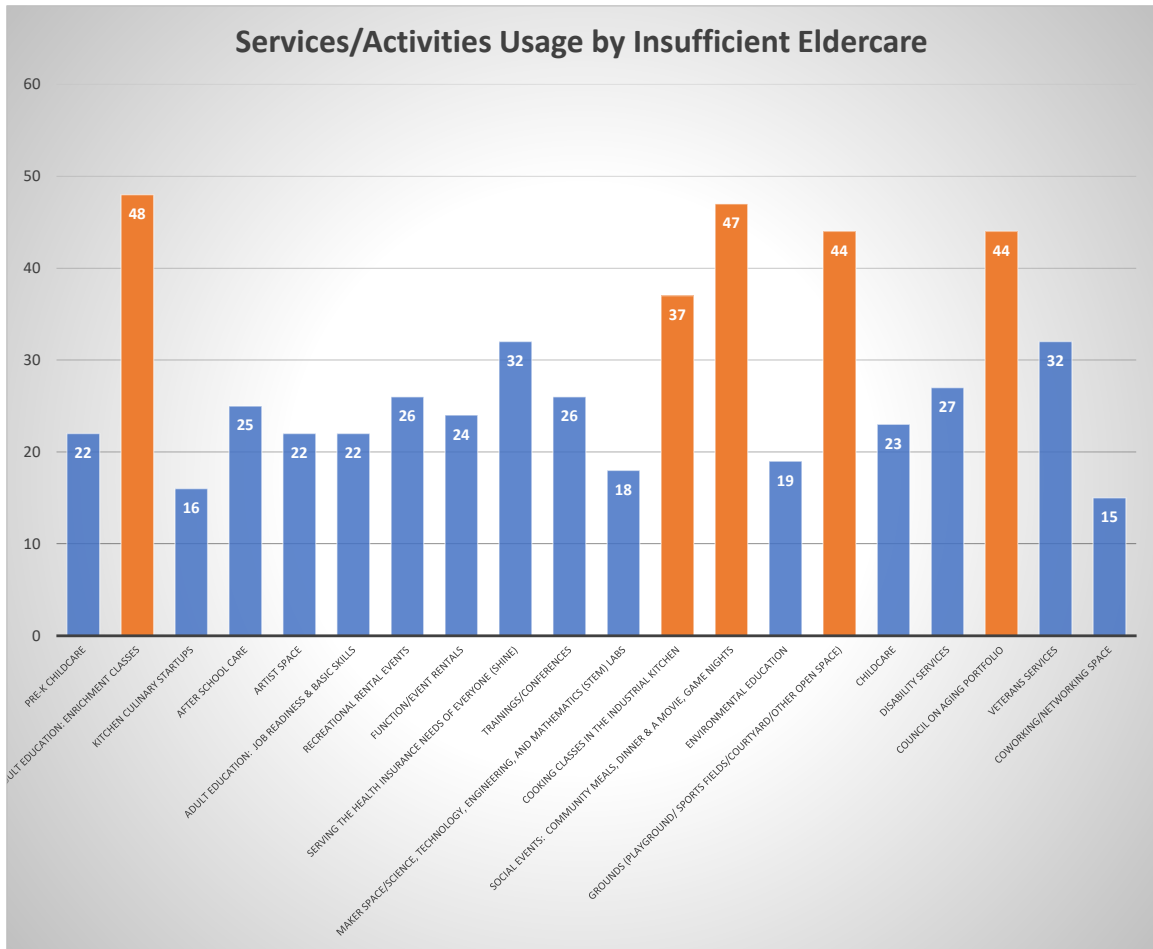


Figure 22 - Services/Activities for Insufficient Eldercare

For respondents that indicated insufficient eldercare, adult ed, cooking classes, social events, groups, and CoA portfolio were the most popular activities. Wareham seniors want a robust and accessible CoA to learn new skills and try new things.

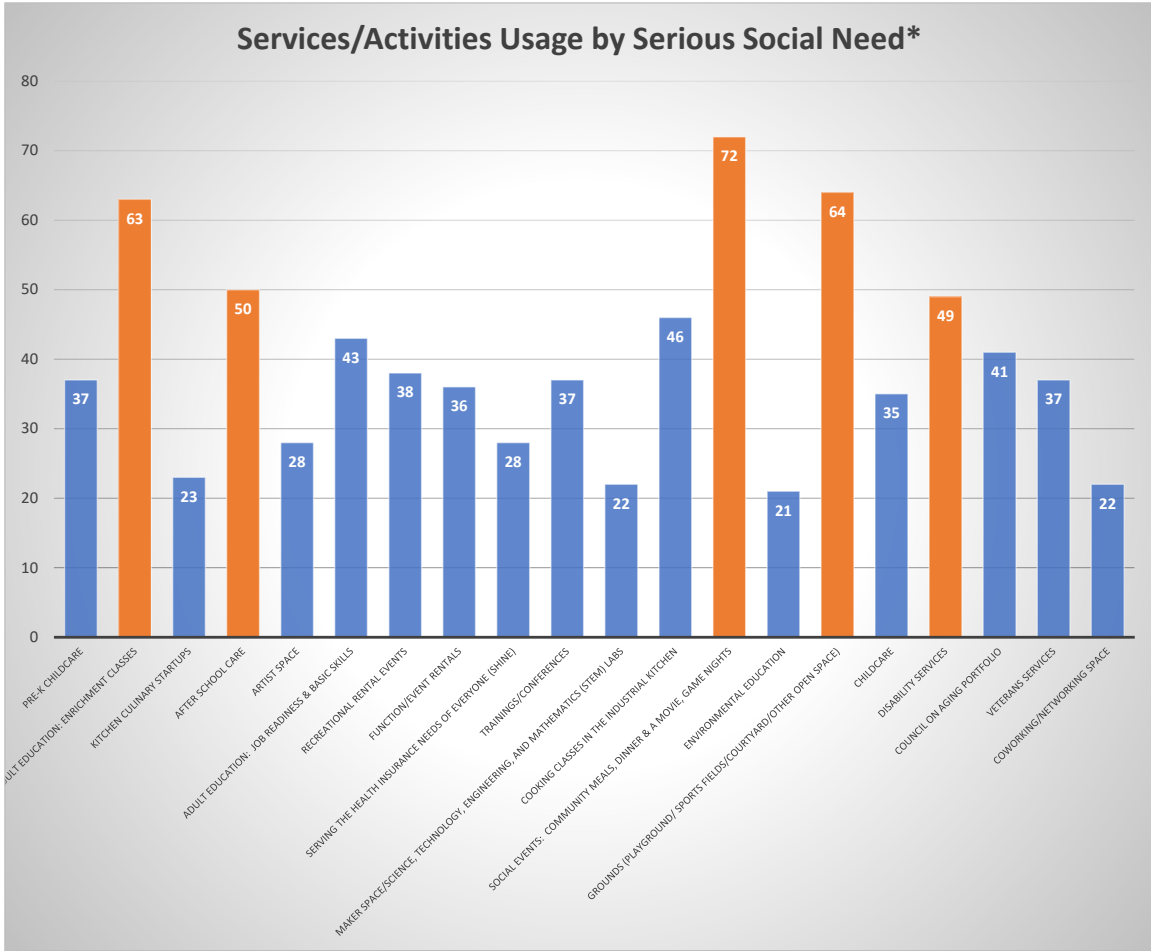


Figure 23 Services/Activities by Serious Social Need

For the purposes of this report, Serious Social Need is defined as having answered “Yes” to any one of the insecurity questions. For those that did, adult ed, after school care, social events, grounds, and disability services were the most popular activities. This indicates that Wareham families in need want access to support structures and services to measurably improve their lives.

WORD CLOUD & OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE

The survey also included two open-ended questions that allowed respondents to enter whatever they wanted. To help visualize those responses, the phrases were put into a word-cloud generator to highlight the most common words. While this method does not necessarily capture the context of the comment, it is effective in at least identifying a potential sentiment.

KEY FINDINGS

After analyzing the survey responses, the Steering Committee came away with 5 key findings:

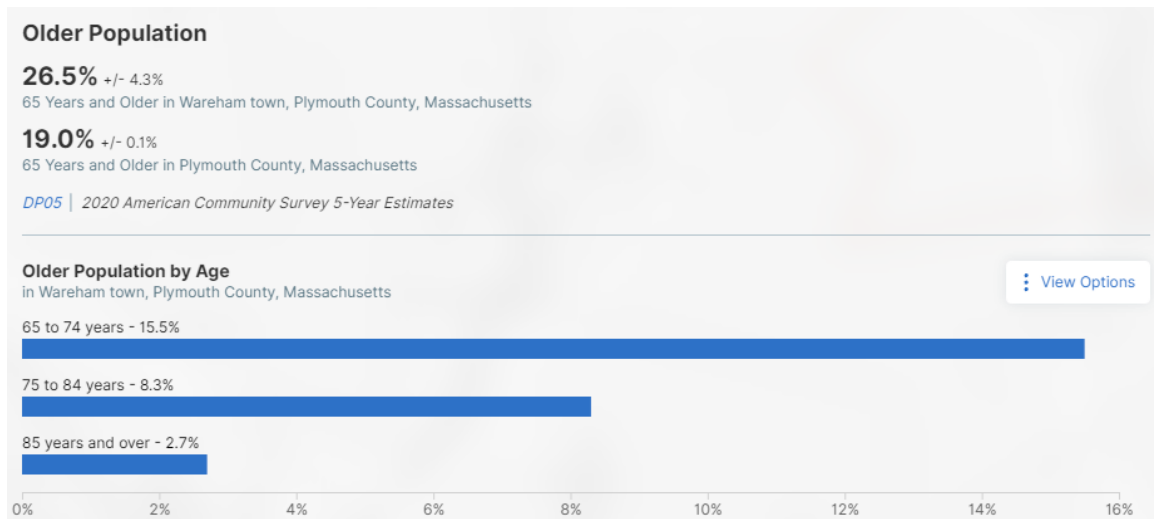
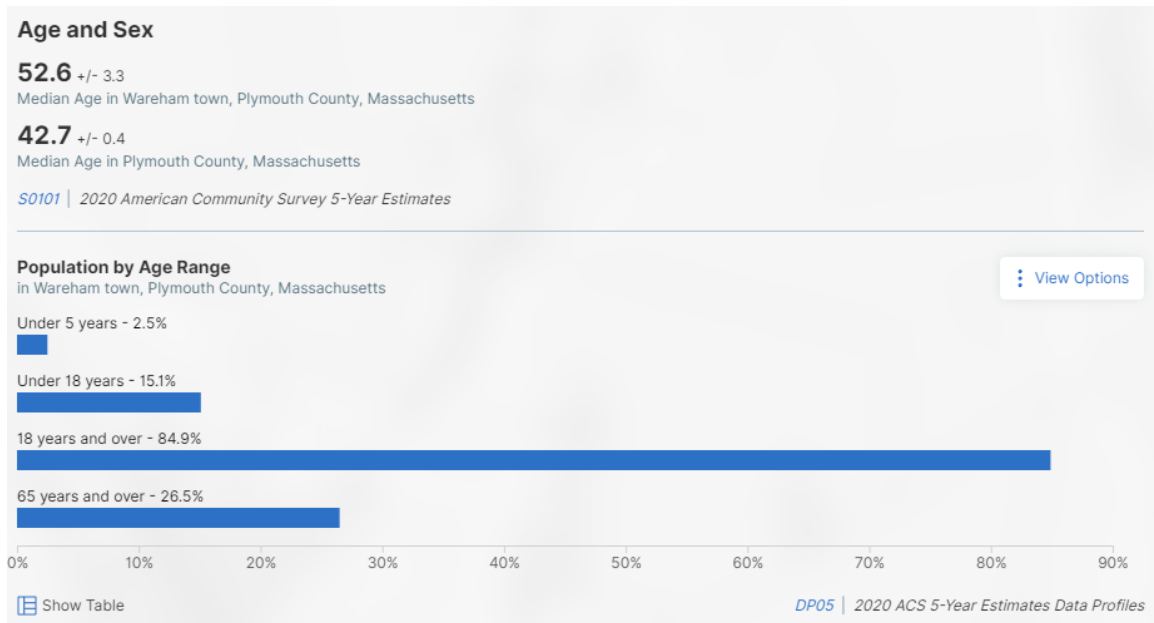
1. Adult Education is a common want for the town regardless of age
2. CoA is by far the most wanted service for senior citizens
3. As Wareham Families age and grow, services related to leisure with children (grounds, social events) become more important
4. As Wareham seniors age, strong support services and activities become more important
5. Wareham residents want a robust and varied multi-generational community center regardless of how it is funded

Demographic Analysis

The Steering Committee analyzed demographic information provided by the United States Census Bureau to understand how a community center might impact the town residents now and in the future. This analysis helped craft the questions for the surveys and determining what sort of services would be valuable for the town to have. Census information was collected via the Census website which provides a vast library of data and visualization tools. The Census data was recorded during the Decennial 2020 Census with supplemental American Community Survey data taken in 2020.

CENSUS INFORMATION

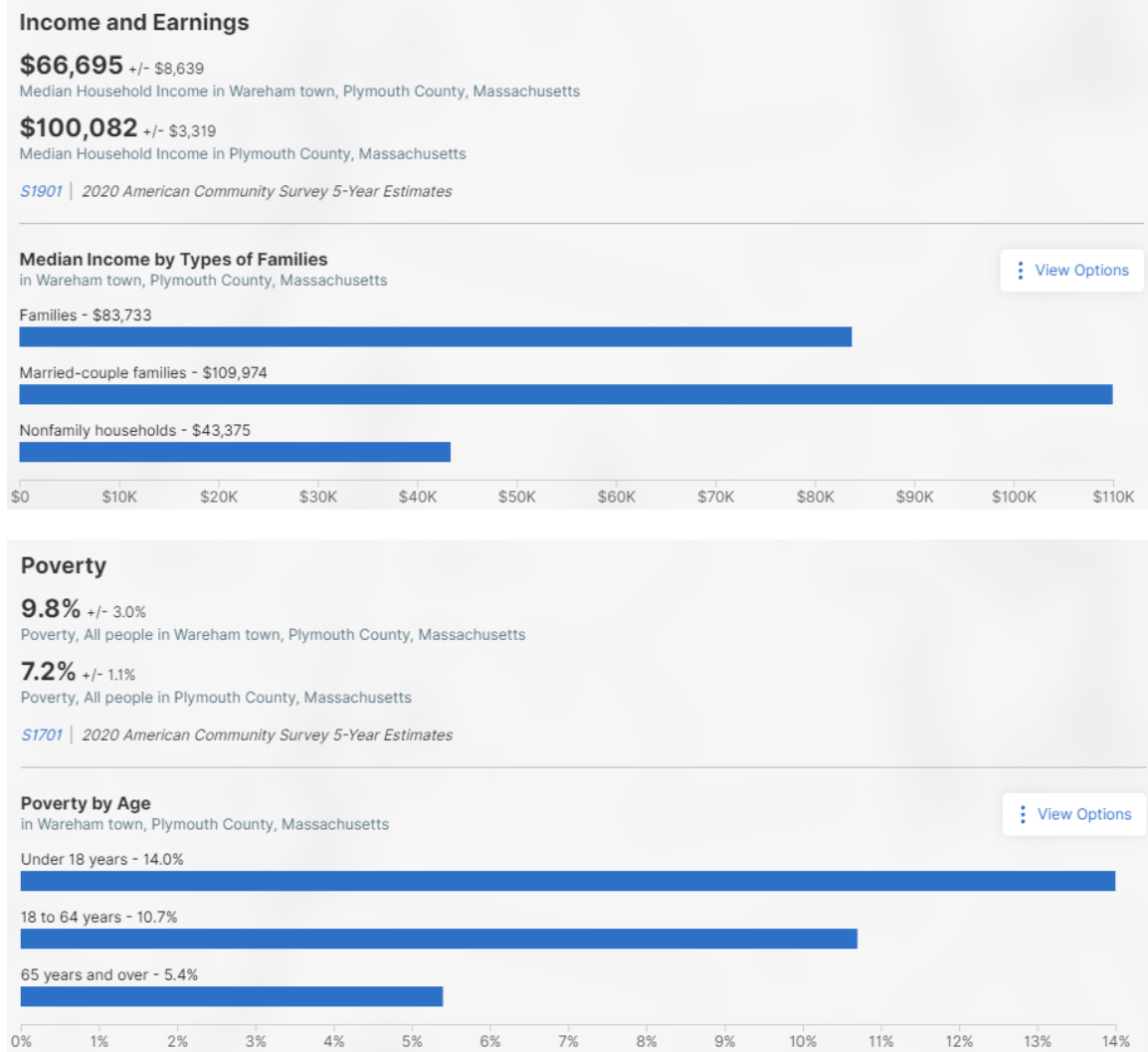
Population and Age



Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

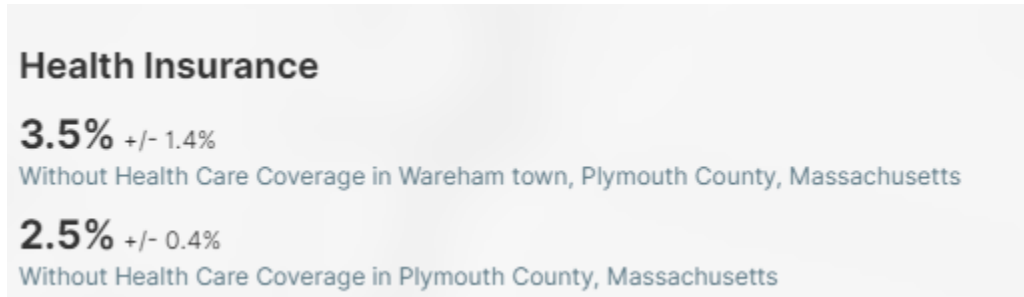
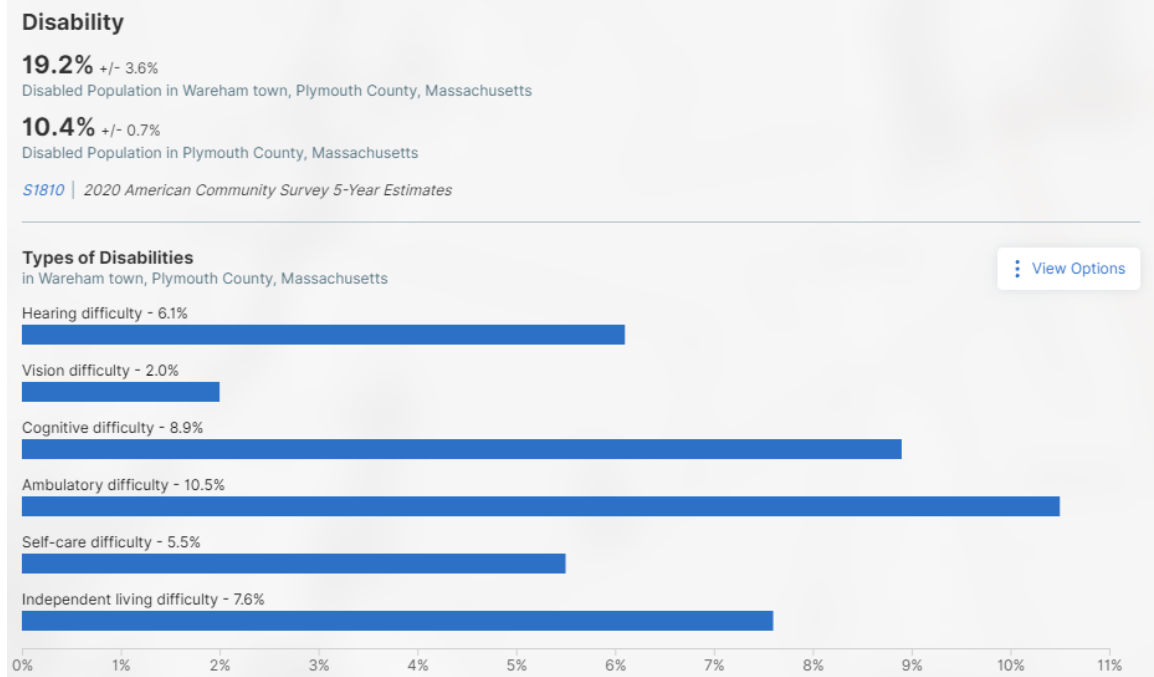
Census data reveals that Wareham has older residents than Plymouth County as a whole. The median age for Wareham is almost ten years older than Plymouth County while there are 7% more people over the age of 65 as a percent of total population.

Income and Poverty



The household income for Wareham is nearly \$40,000 per year lower than Plymouth County as a whole and the poverty rate is 3.6% higher.

Health



Wareham has a larger disabled population with ambulatory disabilities being the greatest category. Our uninsured rate is higher than the County average.

Education

Educational Attainment

25.0% +/- 3.8%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Wareham town, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

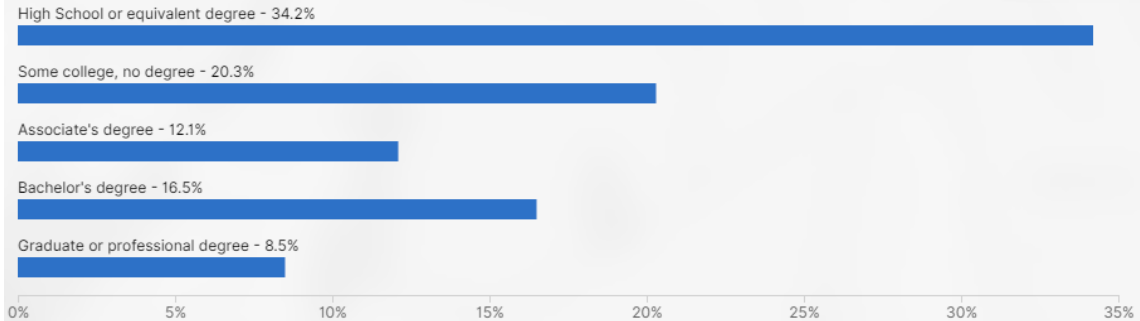
42.7% +/- 1.6%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Plymouth County, Massachusetts

S1501 | 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Education Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older) in Wareham town, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

[View Options](#)



School Enrollment

76.1% +/- 6.5%

School Enrolled Population Enrolled in Kindergarten to 12th Grade in Wareham town, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

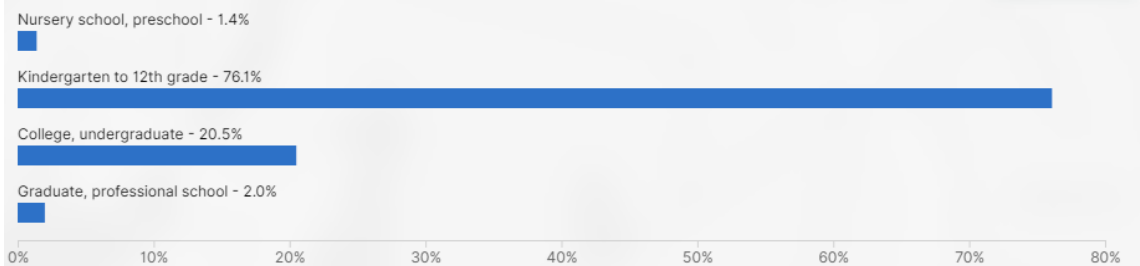
71.4% +/- 1.9%

School Enrolled Population Enrolled in Kindergarten to 12th Grade in Plymouth County, Massachusetts

S1401 | 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

School Enrollment (Population 3 Years and Over Enrolled in School) in Wareham town, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

[View Options](#)



Wareham does not have a rate of bachelor's degrees matching Plymouth County, but we are better at enrolling students in school.

CORRELATION TO THE COMMUNITY CENTER

The Census data reveals the opportunity our town has in regard to population. These findings are born out when looking at the results of the survey and correlate with the services and activities breakdown observed. Establishing a community center with the proposed portfolio of offerings would directly benefit the town in the following ways:

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

1. Provide an accessible and varied Council on Aging program for our large elder population.
2. Provide skill building and educational opportunities for our adults and youth to find good jobs and boost the median income and reducing the poverty rate.
3. Drive post-secondary education through those educational opportunities.
4. Provide support for the disabled community through expanded social services like those that provided letters of interest.

The town population grew between 2010 and 2020 by around 2,000 new residents while the population of seniors continued to grow. If population trends continue, Wareham could see a new population of 25,000 by 2030 with almost a third of that number being senior citizens. The Decas Community Center with a robust a Council on Aging is necessary to support that growth in senior population.

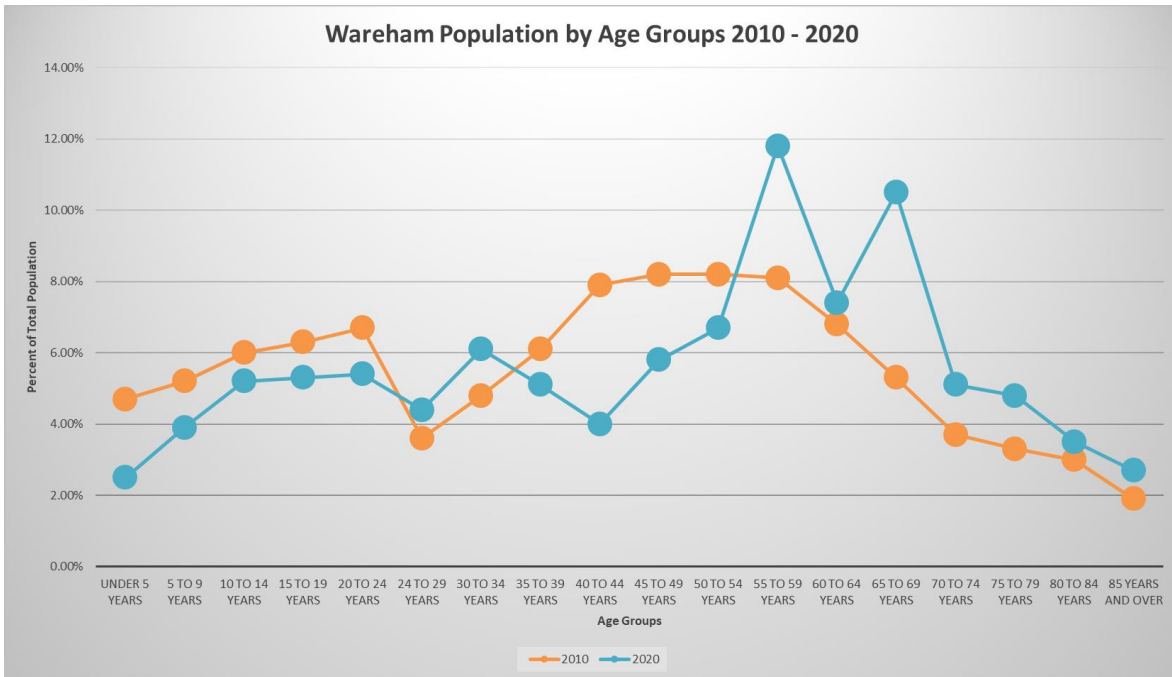


Figure 26 - Wareham Population by Age 2010 – 2020

Town Master Plan

The Wareham Master Plan, revised 1/27/2020 by the Wareham Planning Board, lays out a forward-looking strategy for the town to address some current needs in a collaborative environment fostered by the town government, residents, and businesses alike. The plan contains several sections where the Decas Community Center would directly support ongoing work in those areas.

The Wareham Planning Board hosted public workshops in 2017 and solicited feedback and input for many town documents like the 1998 revision of the Master Plan, the 2006 Community Preservation Plan, and the 2008 Village Study among many others. The intent of these meetings and reviews was to look at the ways these documents reflected each other and to come up with a comprehensive plan with many facets to achieve the long-term goals of the town.

The end result of this work is a comprehensive and easy to read document to help prioritize and guide the town as it works to revitalize key areas and make life better in Wareham. The Decas Community Center proposal directly aligns with several of the items outlined in the Wareham Master Plan.

ALIGNMENT WITH MASTER PLAN

Economic Development Goal 1: Promote new industrial and office park development at the interchange of I-195 and Route 28.

**Economic Development Goal 1:
Promote new industrial and office
park development at the
interchange of I-195 and Route 28
(Exit 21).**

The Big Picture: For a city or town, the term “economic development” traditionally means “pursuing public policies and investments that lead to high-value development and jobs.” Economic development is vital to expanding Wareham’s tax base so that the town can fund the increased services and improved facilities that citizens expect. Wareham should use every tool at its disposal to focus commercial, office, and industrial development to this area.

The portfolio of offerings that are included in the Decas Community Center proposal includes a small business and entrepreneur incubator space via the coworking and

networking spaces. This idea directly feeds Strategy 4 by providing low-cost, low-risk space for new business to start in town.

Strategy 4: Provide facility and infrastructure growth paths for expanding small and incubator businesses.

Description: While continuing to provide small business startup and incubation opportunities, Wareham needs to provide facilities and infrastructure for successful small businesses to expand as they grow. Wareham has facilities for small and start up facilities, but has recently experienced situations where these businesses have outgrown their initial locations and were forced to move outside of Wareham.

Coworking and network spaces have been a priority for funding for the Baker Administration in Massachusetts and several million dollars have been awarded to such facilities around the state including in New Bedford.

Services and Facilities Goal 1: Support ongoing family-friendly initiatives

**Services and Facilities Goal 1:
Support ongoing family-friendly
initiatives**

The Big Picture: During visioning workshops, Wareham residents frequently requested improved services and facilities. Schools, public safety facilities, and community and senior needs – including a Community Center and Council on Aging (COA) facilities – were common themes. These public needs and desires are not unique to Wareham. Communities across the Commonwealth are seeking to increase services with limited public funds. In this way, it is easy to see a clear connection between the Economic Development recommendations, above, and Wareham’s Services and Facilities.

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

The major alignment with the Master Plan is supporting ongoing family-friendly initiatives. The goal is intended to support a community center and expanded Council on Aging facilities and highlights how the community has consistently advocated for such spaces for many years. A good afterschool program with skill enrichment opportunities like computer science or tradecraft would help improve results for Wareham youth and students which aligns with Strategy 2 of improving outcomes for Wareham students.

Strategy 4 of the Services and Facilities Goal 1 describes supporting a community center in town to improve services to seniors and all of Wareham's citizens. The Decas Community Center proposal is a direct response to that strategy.

Strategy 4: Support ongoing efforts to create a new Wareham Community Center in partnership with the Gleason Family YMCA, Council on Aging (COA), and Boys & Girls Club.

Description: The town should work with the emerging coalition of non-profits to pursue a multi-purpose community center that meets the needs of all of Wareham's citizens. Efforts are focused on improving services to seniors – a major theme in the visioning workshops – and “establishing a board made up of YMCA employees, Boys & Girls Club leaders, a liaison from the Board of Selectmen, and COA members.”¹⁴

Services and Facilities Goal 2: Support the economic development and fiscal policies that are required to fund the local services and facilities desired by Wareham's residents

**Services and Facilities Goal 2:
Support the economic
development and fiscal policies
that are required to fund the local
services and facilities desired by
Wareham's residents**

The vision for the Decas Community Center has been to provide a multi-generational community center to the town with a minimum impact to the town budget. Using space in Decas to rent out to community organizations achieves the dual goal of bringing in revenue to support the building while also allowing those organizations to expand or establish themselves in the town and serve more of the residents who may need it.

Services and Facilities Goal 3: Augment local services through volunteerism

Services and Facilities Goal 3: Augment local services through volunteerism

The Big Picture: In the current climate of shrinking budgets and economic competition, city and town governments must sometimes “do more with less.” One way of supporting cultural, civic, and recreation activities is through volunteerism and public participation. In fact, given the town’s fiscal constraints and numerous requests for improved or restored services from town government, the need for this type of community Stewardship and Service is so clear in Wareham that this document includes an extra element on that theme.

Much of the work done developing this proposal has been done through volunteers. Indeed, there are volunteers already interested in helping or donating to the community center when it is operational. The Decas Community Center is envisioned as a crown jewel of the town that we can be proud of and would be supported by a robust network of volunteers in town.

Stewardship and Service Goal 1: Build on Wareham’s sense of community to supplement local government and “fill in the gaps.”

Stewardship and Service Goal 1: Build on Wareham’s sense of community to supplement local government and “fill in the gaps.”

The Big Picture: The visioning process for this document revealed a list of desired service requests for Wareham’s local government. While the economic development and tax reform strategies described above can generate revenues needed to improve or restore these services, other strategies are also necessary – especially Service and Stewardship. In addition to making requests and holding government accountable, citizens must also be willing to play an active role in their community.

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

As mentioned above, volunteers have been committed to this project since the inception. There is currently a volunteer instructor for a computer lab program and arts & crafts program for youth and adults waiting for the center to become operational. These programs would directly affect Strategy 1 of Stewardship and Service Goal 1.

Strategy 1: Assist with services to Wareham's youngest and oldest residents.

Description: Children and seniors require the support of their community. However, Wareham's Council on Aging (COA) and School System have recently experienced funding reductions and/or rising costs. For example, due to funding shortages, the COA no longer has a full-time director. These vital local services must continue to be augmented through volunteerism, like the current COA's Meals on Wheels Program and the Wareham Friends of the Elderly.

Responsible Parties: Wareham Public Schools, COA, Wareham Friends of the Elderly, local churches and Faith-based organizations, Youth Corps (such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts).

Stewardship and Service Goal 2: Work together to get to “yes” on common sense ideas that support Wareham and its residents

**Stewardship and Service Goal 2:
Work together to get to “yes” on
common sense ideas that support
Wareham and its residents**

The Big Picture: Citizens who request increased services and amenities from local government must recognize that these activities require public funding. This understanding would ideally lead to active and enthusiastic support economic development, improved intergovernmental communication, efficient and accountable fiscal policies, and tax reform – many of the strategies described in this document. In order for these efforts to succeed on the ground and at the ballot box, the Community needs local champions who, face-to-face with neighbors and coworkers, clearly describe the benefits that each citizen and household will receive – as well as the

The Decas Steering Committee is a volunteer group who advocate for different interest in town. There is representation for seniors and the CoA, disabled residents, athletes, and youth in the members of the committee. We have worked for months to develop a comprehensive and common-sense idea that we all support and believe in.

Open Space Goal 2: Prioritize land conservation that builds on existing open space networks, considers “green infrastructure,” protects water and habitat resources, and is highly visible to the public.

**Open Space Goal 2: Prioritize land
conservation that builds on
existing open space networks,
considers “green infrastructure,”
protects water and habitat
resources, and is highly visible to
the public.**

The Big Picture: In addition to planning for and managing open spaces, Wareham can pursue a few initiatives that build upon its successful efforts to acquire land for permanent protection.

The preservation of Decas is a direct impact to Open Space Goal 2. The demolition of the school and construction of commercial space would necessarily reduce the amount of open space to the town through the playgrounds and sports fields and potentially threaten the river and wetlands habitat to the south of the property. In addition, the building is in good condition and reusing it for a community center would be “highly visible” and provide the foundation for expanding green space via walking trails around the school to connect to Horseshoe Pond.

Community Preservation funds could be used to enhance the open space at the school further without impacting town revenue as this would address Strategy 3 of Open Space Goal 2. The Steering Committee met with the Community Preservation Committee chair to discuss how funding is acquired and what it can be used on. Several options were discussed such as pickleball courts, a community garden, and walking trails around the fields. These would all greatly enhance the outdoor space for the town and its residents.

Natural and Cultural Resources Goal 2: Advance Wareham’s unique cultural events and the Wareham Historical Commission’s preservation efforts.

**Natural and Cultural Resources
Goal 2: Advance Wareham’s
unique cultural events and the
Wareham Historical Society and
Historical Commission’s
preservation efforts.**

The Big Picture: Many public workshop participants are proud of their town and its culture and history. Wareham can continue to support ongoing and successful cultural activities.

**Strategy 1: Support a Historic
Preservation Plan to catalogue,
protect, and promote Wareham’s
Historic Sites, Special Places, and
Special Events.**

Communities across Massachusetts have created plans dedicated to preserving and promoting their culture and local history. The scope and format of these Historic Preservation Plans vary by community. According to the Massachusetts Preservation Planning Division, “the first step in a community’s preservation planning

process is to identify, describe and locate buildings, structures, objects, areas, burial grounds, landscape features, and sites that are of historical, architectural, or archaeological importance to the community, the state, or the nation. A comprehensive inventory of a town’s historical assets serves as the basis for all future preservation activities.” According to public visioning comments, Wareham’s Cultural and Historic Inventory includes:

Historic Sites

- Tobey Homestead
- Tremont Nail Factory
- Decas School
- Point Independence (Bridge)
- Stone Bridge
- Dummy Bridge
- Onset Bandstand and Gazebo
- Area including: The Old Town Hall, the Methodist Meeting House, The Fearing Tavern, The Old Company Store

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

The preservation of Decas via the community center would be an obvious solution to Goal 2. In fact, the Decas School is explicitly identified as a historic site to preserve. Demolishing the property would be a loss for the historical community and not serve to advance the town's unique resources.

Comparative Analysis

The Steering Committee considered some of the alternative proposals being worked on including selling the property. The Steering Committee felt that doubling the effort going over the same ground would not be a good use of the limited time and funding available to the committee, and the committee felt that the highest and best use of Decas remains an multi-generational community center.

PROPERTY SALE & REDEVELOPMENT

The Steering Committee considered the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) report published November 19th, 2020, as the basis for comparison to the community center proposal.

To recap the SRPEDD report, the preferred scenario was rezoning the land as a business overlay, teardown the property, and sell to a developer to build a high-intensity lab/flex space in the model of Sensata Tech in Attleboro, MA.

The Steering Committee opposes the plan for the following reasons:

- At the time, the sewer system was sufficient for such development.
 - The current condition of the sewer system would make connections difficult given system capacity. By contrast, the Decas School is already connected to the sewer system and would not add flow.
- The existing asbestos in the building will increase razing costs. The SRPEDD report identifies \$1MM or more to demolish the structure.
- Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) and Chapter 43D overlay will impact tax revenues.
 - Since TIF offsets future tax revenue in exchange for development, the potential for the town is diminished.
- Development would necessarily eliminate the playgrounds and fields.
 - The grounds at Decas were the second most popular item in the community survey. Their removal would significantly degrade the options for our town's youth and athletic groups.
- The SRPEDD report only considered business development and subdivision for a public safety complex. Other municipal uses were outside the scope of the work.
- The SRPEDD report rests on having a developer and business lined up to lease the proposed building.
 - There are already several vacant buildings all along Cranberry Highway, some of which have been vacant for some time.

Community Center Operations

A community center should be the hub of the town. Successful community centers have well-tailored programs based on local needs and availability. The Decas Steering Committee endeavored to develop a prototype portfolio including schedules and example calendars. These are by no means final or authoritative but serve to function as a template for the future community center to operate on.

NOTIONAL SCHEDULE

An example schedule is provided below. The basic idea is that the building manager would open the building at 8AM ahead of the educational programs starting or other tenants arriving. Various programs and activities are run throughout the day based on scheduled need and the cleaning services arrive in the evening to perform cleaning.


 Time	Example Date
Time	Description
8:00 AM	Building Manager Arrives
8:30 AM	BM Walkthrough and Open Building
9:00 AM	Education Program Students Arrive/Grounds Close
9:30 AM	Council On Aging Gymnasium Activity 1
10:00 AM	Community Kitchen and Breakfast
10:30 AM	Education Program Students Recess
11:00 AM	Adult Education Program 1
11:30 AM	Adult Education Program 2
12:00 PM	Community Kitchen and Lunch
12:30 PM	Education Program AM Students Depart
1:00 PM	Education Program PM Students Arrive
1:30 PM	Council On Aging Gymnasium Activity 2
2:00 PM	Open Art Hour
2:30 PM	Open Art Hour
3:00 PM	After School Program 1
3:30 PM	After School Program 2
4:00 PM	After School Program 3
4:30 PM	Adult Education Program 3
5:00 PM	Community Kitchen and Dinner
5:30 PM	Evening Programming
6:00 PM	Cleaning Services Arrive to Clean
6:30 PM	Community Computer Classes
7:00 PM	Art Show
7:30 PM	Cleaning Services Depart and Building Closed

Figure 27 - Example Daily Schedule

OPERATIONS MATRIX

The example operations matrix reflects when certain activities or facilities would be unavailable. For example, the playground would be unavailable during education services operation and the rental space would be limited to tenants only. The green fields represent time open to all while yellow represents a time available to schedule for use. This flexible schedule would allow the building to operate efficiently while protecting the interests of everyone in the center.

Time	Playgrounds	Fields	Kitchen	Main Gym	Aux Gym	Cafetrium	Rental Area	Computer Lab	Coworking Space	Maker Space	Art Studio	Courtyard		
8:00AM	Educational Service in Session				Only available to educational services		Only available to tenants			Closed	Closed			
9:00AM										Closed	Closed			
10:00AM				Ed. Services Snack										
11:00AM														
12:00PM												Closed	Closed	
1:00PM												Closed	Closed	
2:00PM				Ed. Services Lunch										
3:00PM														
4:00PM														
5:00PM														
6:00PM														
7:00PM														
8:00PM														
			Legend											
		Open to All	Schedule Time	Closed										

Figure 28 - Operations Matrix

POLICY FRAMEWORK

In order to effectively operate the community center, a set of policies would be required to set a baseline of acceptable conduct and general operations. These documents and policies can be based off of existing town policies or drafted exclusively for use at the Decas Community Center. This list identifies policies that would need to be drafted or developed for the center.

- Hours of Operation
 - Define when the building is open and when it is not including holidays, etc.
- Tenant Responsibility Policy
 - Delineate where the tenant is responsible and where the town is responsible including upkeep expectations, parking, etc.
- Code of Conduct Policy
 - Define behavioral expectations in the building and consequences for violations included bans and refusal of service.
- Information Technology Use Policy
 - Define allowed use of technology in the center including labs, spaces, etc.
- Kitchen Use Policy
 - Define allowed use of kitchen space included sanitary and safety practices and expectations.
- Coworking Space Use Policy
 - Define acceptable use of coworking space including seating, usage, volume/music, etc.
- Makespace Use Policy
 - Define acceptable use of makerspace including safety precautions.
- Art Studio Policy
 - Define acceptable use of art studio including supply use, cleanup, and care.
- Gymnasium Policy & Liability Waiver
 - Provide liability waiver for physical activities in the gymnasium.
- Municipal Use Policy
 - Policy to define how to rent space for social events, rates, and agreements for usage.

CALENDAR

2022		JULY		MONDAY		DECAS Example	
CALENDAR YEAR	CALENDAR MONTH	CALENDAR MONTH	CALENDAR MONTH	FIRST DAY OF WEEK	FIRST DAY OF WEEK	FIRST DAY OF WEEK	FIRST DAY OF WEEK
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
27	28	29	30	01	02	03	Flag Football Games - 10AM - 2PM
04 4th of July Community BBQ - 2PM @ Courtyard	05 CoA Book Club - 10AM	06 Guided Walk @ Horseshoe Pond - 2PM	07 Fine Arts Class - 7PM Computer Skills Class - 7PM	08	09	10	Flag Football Games - 10AM - 2PM
11	12 CoA Painting Class - 10AM	13	14 Fine Arts Class - 7PM	15	16	17	Flag Football Games - 10AM - 2PM
18	19	20	21 Fine Arts Class - 7PM Computer Skills Class - 7PM	22	23	24	Flag Football Games - 10AM - 2PM
25	26	27	28 Fine Arts Class - 7PM	29	30	31	Flag Football Games - 10AM - 2PM
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	

Figure 29 - Example Calendar

Project Schedule

In order to execute on the Decas Community Center, the Steering Committee developed a schedule based on the expected work necessary and the approximate level of effort for each work item. Based on the estimated work and labor, an initial date of 18 months from start of the project is considered as the milestone for 100% operational capability where the community center is operating as designed. A detailed breakdown of the phases and an example schedule is provided below.

PHASES

Request for Proposal Phase

The town will solicit bids for tenants at the Decas Community Center. The Town Administrator shall issue RFPs and accept responses to be considered against the rubric defined in the RFP. The Town Administrator shall award and execute contracts to those organizations who meet the evaluation criteria in the RFP. RFPs shall be considered until all rental space is allocated.

Key People:	Town Administrator, RFP respondents
Period of Performance:	Project start > Ongoing (1 year initially).
Inputs:	None
Outputs:	List of Tenants with executed contracts
Level of Effort:	Low (TA reviewing RFPs)

Inventory Phase

The town will inventory buildings for the move including Decas, the CoA, and any other offices that might be part of the move. Each location will have a corresponding inventory list of furniture and items that will be relocated to Decas based on floor planning.

Key People:	Town Administrator, Municipal Maintenance, CoA, volunteers
Period of Performance:	Project Start > Start + 6mos
Inputs:	Existing building inventory
Outputs:	Master inventory list
Level of Effort:	Low (1 person per building making inventory over 6mos)

Building Preparation Phase

The Decas building is prepared for moving into. Spaces are cleaned and trash removed. Minor repairs like burnt out lights are repaired. Technology infrastructure is moved into the building and staged in their respective locations. The Town Administrator verifies utility services to building. The final floor plan is developed based on RFP responses.

Key People: Town Administrator, Municipal Maintenance, CoA, IT services, volunteers

Period of Performance: Project Start + 2mos > Project Start + 16mos

Inputs: List of tenants

Outputs: Final Floor Plan

Level of Effort: High (4 people over 1 year cleaning and staging)

Relocation & Establishment Phase

The CoA and other offices are relocated to Decas. Furniture is assembled and placed as requested. Schedules and portfolios are finalized and published to the town. Website is created to host forms, newsletters, calendars. Tenants begin to move in.

Key People: Town Administrator, Municipal Maintenance, CoA, IT services, volunteers

Period of Performance: Project Start + 16mos > Project Start + 18mos

Inputs: Final Floor Plan, Master Inventory List

Outputs: 100% Operational Capability Milestone Reached

Level of Effort: High (4 people over 6mos moving/staging)

Building Repairs & Investment Phase

Building is repaired or upgraded as necessary on triaged priority list. Ongoing while community center is operational.

Key People: Town Administrator, Municipal Maintenance, Building Manager, volunteers

Period of Performance: Ongoing (triaged phases for priority repairs/upgrades)

Inputs: Priority Repair/Upgrade List

Outputs: Priority Repair/Upgrade List

Level of Effort: Varied based on priorities

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

An example schedule reflecting the phases is included below.

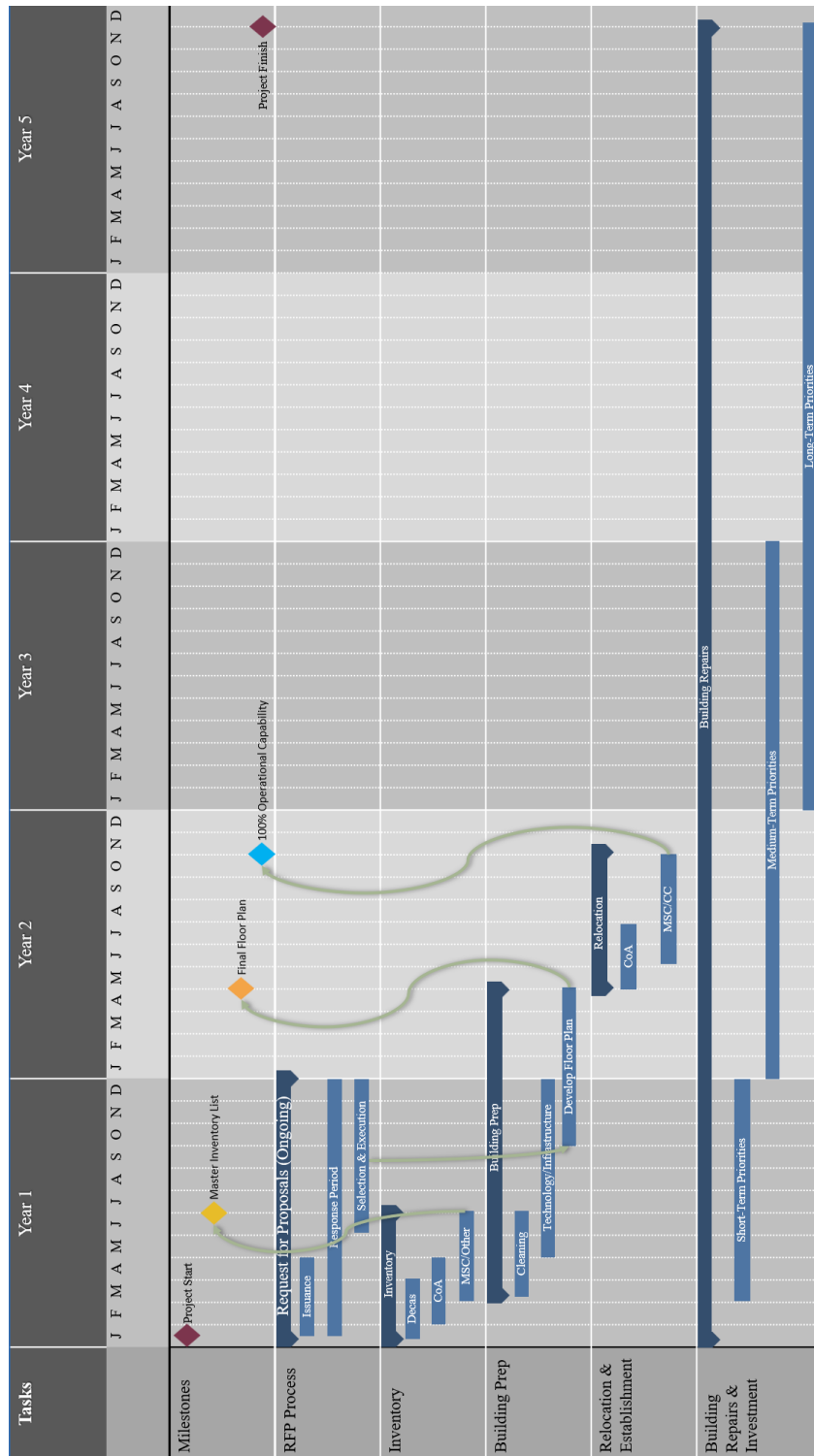


Figure 30 - Example Phases

Grant Funding

The Steering Committee met with various town committees and boards to discuss the possibility of leveraging existing state and federal grant money to address some of the needs at Decas or otherwise enhance the property. The Steering Committee determined that both Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Community Preservation (CPC) Funds could be used in different ways at Decas.

CDBG FUNDING

CDBG funding is a tranche of money given to communities that have a demonstrated need in housing or economic characteristics. The CDBG program is administered by the state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). As a Mini-Entitlement community, Wareham gets a block of grant money each year to distribute. There are strict eligibility requirements and money cannot be used to cover operating expenses for municipal buildings or to backfill capital expenditures. The allocation of CDBG funds is controlled by the Board of Selectmen.

DHCD identifies the following activities as eligible for CDBG funding:

Eligible Activities

Eligible CDBG projects include but are not limited to:

- housing rehabilitation or development
- micro-enterprise or other business assistance
- infrastructure
- community/public facilities
- public social services
- planning
- removal of architectural barriers to allow access by persons with disabilities
- downtown or area revitalization

Applications can be submitted by individual communities or regionally by multiple communities with one lead community.

Figure 31 - DHCD Eligible Activities

After reviewing the program requirements, the Steering Committee identified some areas that CDBG funding could be used for:

- ADA Remediation at Decas School

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Audit conducted on all town buildings presented 4/4/2019, four items were identified as being deficient

1. Accessible Parking
Regrade and restripe parking spots - \$10,500
2. Curb Ramps
Rebuild ramps and address spalling - \$2,500
3. Entry Door
Install automatic door opener - \$2,500
4. Entry Threshold
Replace thresholds - \$100

Bathrooms were not considered at the time of the audit as the school indicated that there are no public bathrooms in the building but could be reconsidered once the community center is operating. Since Decas is identified in the ADA Audit report, CDBG funds are allowed to be used to address specific ADA deficiencies in the building.

- **Building Remediation at Decas School**
Under the Community/Public facilities activity, funding could be used to address some of the items in need of repair identified in the architectural assessment. Section 105(a)(2) of Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 specifically allows for CDBG funds to be allowed for these uses.

Section 105(a)(2): Acquisition, construction, reconstruction or installation of public works and facilities, except for buildings for the general conduct of government, and site or other improvements.

Examples:

- Installation of storm sewers to reduce the burden on an existing public wastewater disposal system
- Reconstruction of deteriorated streets and sidewalks and installation of street lights
- **Rehabilitation of a public building for use as a senior center**
- **Acquisition and rehabilitation by a non-profit organization of a building to be used as a multi-service center for low and moderate-income persons**
- CDBG assistance to install new utilities (electrical, water, sewer, on-site septic system) for a building that will be used as a neighborhood service center

Figure 32 - HCDA Title 1 Section 105(a)(2)

- Energy Efficient Cooling
Appendix A of the 2017 Massachusetts CDBG Program Application Guidance describes the eligible activities for CDBG funds. Item 2 identifies energy efficient improvements as an eligible activity
 2. the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, or installation (including design features and improvements with respect to such construction, reconstruction, or installation that promote energy efficiency) of public works, facilities (except for buildings for the general conduct of government), and site or other improvements;

Figure 33 - Title 1 Appendix A

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING

The Community Preservation Act was passed in 2000 and allows communities to establish a Community Preservation Fund that can be used for specific activities. Funding is raised via a property tax of no more than 3% and is adopted by a town vote. Wareham adopted the CPA in 2003 with a 3.0% levy rate. The four categories for CPA funding are:

1. Open Space Protection
2. Historic Preservation
3. Affordable Housing
4. Outdoor Recreation



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COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND ALLOWABLE SPENDING PURPOSES

	OPEN SPACE	HISTORIC RESOURCES	RECREATIONAL LAND	COMMUNITY HOUSING
DEFINITION	Land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and salt water marshes and other wetlands, ocean, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, beaches, dunes and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use	Building, structure, vessel or real property listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places or determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of the city or town	Land for active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field Does <u>not</u> include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure	Housing for low and moderate income individuals and families, including low or moderate income seniors Moderate income is less than 100% , and low income is less than 80% of US HUD Area Wide Median Income
ACQUIRE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (effective 12/5/2006)
CREATE	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
PRESERVE Means protect from injury, harm or destruction, not maintenance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUPPORT	No	No	No	Yes, includes funding for community's affordable housing trust
REHABILITATE/RESTORE Means remodel, reconstruct or repair (extraordinary, not maintenance) to make property functional for intended use, including improvements to comply with federal, state or local building or access codes or with federal standards for rehabilitation of historic properties	Yes, if acquired or created with Community Preservation funds	Yes	Yes, if acquired or created with Community Preservation funds	Yes, if acquired or created with Community Preservation funds

Chart courtesy of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue

www.communitypreservation.org

Figure 34 - CPF Allowable Spending Matrix

The Steering Committee considered the eligible spending purposes and identified some areas that could be implemented using CPA funds.

- **Community Gardens**
Under the Recreational Land allowance, community gardens could be established at Decas. There is sufficient land at Decas to accommodate even large community gardens.
- **Walking Trails**
Under the Recreational Land allowance, walking trails around the property could be constructed.
- **Pickleball Courts**
Pickleball Courts are very popular especially with seniors. Under the Recreational Land allowance, pickleball courts could be constructed. The courts are indicated on the property map in the architectural assessment.

These are only a representation of what funding might be available. The Steering Committee was limited in time, but we did reach out to our federal and state representatives to understand what other sources of funding might exist. We received some leads on potential opportunities but many of them required municipal action outside of the scope and authority of the Steering Committee.

Decas School Steering Committee Feasibility Study

RECOMMENDED PHASE

Accessing the CDBG and CPA funds requires adherence to a specific timeline including review and approval by the cognizant boards and authorities. The estimated timelines for creating applications and getting through the required process is laid out below.

CDBG Funds

NOV-JAN: Develop activities or items to be put up for review

JAN-FEB: Gather input including via the public and other stakeholders

FEB: Present to Board of Selectmen for review and approval

MAR: Submit application for approval to DHCD

JUL-AUG: Review application approvals and next steps

CPA Funds

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has two opportunities for funding to coincide with town meetings. Any awards of CPA funds must be approved by the town body at town meetings via warrant articles. The CPC conducts reviews in early December for consideration for Spring town meetings and early June for Fall town meetings.

The CPC recommends a window of approximately 6 months between submission of applications, and award funding.

Summary and Recommendations

The Decas School Steering Committee worked hard developing this feasibility study and we wanted to answer several key questions:

1. Is this idea financially feasible?
2. Is the Decas School suitable?
3. Does the community want this?
4. Will this improve Wareham?
5. Can we get help with it?

After months of work, we can answer those questions.

1. By using extra space to rent to community organizations and social services we can offset or eliminate the cost to the town.
2. The building is architecturally sound and is ready to be used as a community center. There are small updates recommended but nothing that would make the building unsafe.
3. The community overwhelmingly supports the center, especially the senior citizen community. The survey results prove it out.
4. The center aligns with several goals of the Wareham Master Plan. More activities, better facilities, and greater networking will make Wareham better for generations.
5. There is funding available to improve Decas.

The Decas School Steering Committee recommends moving forward with the plan outlined in this report to convert the Decas school into a multi-generational community center for the benefit of the town.