3.3.1 Introduction

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A. Overview of the Process since PDP Submission

Medford High School is a public comprehensive high school located at 489 Winthrop Street, Medford, Massachusetts that supports grades 9-12 with a current enrollment of 1,210 students. It is also the home of the District's Central Offices (including the Welcome Center for the District), Kid's Corner Daycare, the Medford Family Network (a non-profit family support program) and Medford Community Media (public, education and government access television studio). The 29.4 acre site is bound by Temple Shalom property to the southeast, Winthrop Street to the south, residential properties to the west, and the Middlesex Fells Reservation to the north and east. Along with the high school building, at-grade parking, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, practice fields and the Edgerly Sports complex fields are developed features on site.

The City of Medford submitted the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) submission on February 25, 2026 and since that time the Medford Comprehensive High School Building Committee (MCHSBC) met regularly to review the final design alternatives and to eventually select the preferred solution on June 10, 2026. During the period between February 25, 2026 and June 10, 2026, four (4) community forums were held to solicit community feedback, and online mechanisms were utilized to allow for additional input.

Additionally, the project team attended multiple community and district events with models and boards to inform a broad range of residents about the status of the project and the options that were being considered. The MCHSBC has endeavored to maintain a public-facing and transparent process throughout the feasibility study. All building committee meetings were conducted in hybrid fashion to facilitate community access, were recorded and promptly uploaded to the Project website.

While the initial submission of the PDP report on February 25, 2026 suggested that all twenty-nine (29) PDP design alternatives would be advanced to the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) phase of the feasibility study, initial MSBA feedback led to a PDP report supplement being submitted on April 1, 2026 which reduced the design alternatives to be studied to six (6). These six (6) alternatives were selected by the MCHSBC at their March 23, 2026 meeting.

A seventh alternative was added to consideration following this shortlisting as is required by MSBA Project Advisory 96, which states that any new construction alternative that includes a new Natatorium must be accompanied by a version of the same new school construction option that omits the stand-alone Natatorium structure.

The formal MSBA review of the PDP report was received by the City of Medford on May 5, 2026 and part of that review requested that at least one additional design alternative be considered by the MCHSBC. The additional design alternative to be studied was a "high school only" scenario that would include only those programs associated with Grades 9-12 high school instruction, omitting District programs currently located at the building such as the Central District Offices and Welcome Center. It was also to omit non-high school programs that were identified in the SOI to be brought to the high school, such as the preschool program.





Community Forum

Through communication with the MSBA, the City of Medford understood that this additional option was requested to facilitate a conversation with the community about the additional space and project costs associated with the non-high school related programs. The Project Team added this high school only alternative to consideration, bringing the number of final alternatives to be considered to eight (8).

While the PSR feasibility study phase was being conducted, it was determined that a deed restriction had been placed on a portion of the property in 1967 as part of the land transfer between DCR and the City of Medford that established the current property boundaries.

This deed restriction precludes construction of a building on a portion of the property and required the Project Team and the MCHSBC to re-evaluate the final design alternatives. It was determined that three (3) of the final alternatives could proceed as originally designed (or four (4) when the alternative without the Natatorium is considered), as they did not position a building on deed restricted property. Two (2) of the final alternatives were modified to avoid the deed restricted property, and one (1) of the final alternatives was deemed to be unfeasible as most of the building was located on deed restricted property and was removed from consideration as a result. Modifications to the final alternatives under consideration due to the deed restriction were voted on by the MCHSBC at their May 20, 2026 meeting.

The addition of the “high school only” design alternative and the modifications due to the deed restriction brought the final number of alternatives under consideration for the preferred solution back to a total of seven (7).

The Project Team has determined that the estimated total costs for the final alternatives are in the range of $521M (base repair option) to $811M.

The MCHSBC voted to advance the addition/renovation **Option C.2.2A** into the Schematic Design Phase as the preferred solution at their June 10, 2026 meeting. The anticipated budget for this alternative is $795M. This budget is based on the approved Space Summary, the Educational Plan and all known conditions and constraints.

The City of Medford and the Project Team will continue to develop this alternative and seek ways to reduce the overall project cost in Schematic Design to aid in a sucessful debt overide in May of 2027.

The City of Medford is conducting a survey of other available space throughout the city that could potentially house any of the non-high school-specific community spaces currently located in the high school building to assist in the reduction of the overall area and total project cost. This additional study will be completed during the summer of 2026, with the goal of having the final list of non-high school-specific spaces to be included in the building confirmed at the October 6, 2026 MCHSBC meeting so that the Schematic Design plans and cost estimate can be completed accordingly.

The City of Medford 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report has been included as Appendix B. The document includes a full financial report for the year July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, long term financial plans, and financial reports. Financing for this project will be based upon a successful debt exclusion override. The City of Medford is confident that it can acquire necessary support to fund the project when it is up for approval in May of 2027.

B. Summary of Updated Project Schedule

The Preliminary Project Schedule included has been updated and included to indicate all milestones that have been achieved and that are currently planned or projected. The Project Schedule provided anticipates the MSBA Board of Director's approval of the Preferred Schematic Report and authorization to proceed into Schematic Design at the August 26, 2026 MSBA Board Meeting. The Schedule also reflects the potential Facilities Assessment Subcommittee Meeting dates at which the Preferred Schematic Report may be reviewed, July 15 or July 29, 2026. The Schematic Design and the MSBA Board of Director's approval of the Project Scope and Budget is anticipated at the MSBA Board of Director's April 29, 2027 Board Meeting. The Public Vote to appropriate funds for the new school will be by City Council Vote in May 2027 and Citywide Vote planned for the month of June 2027.

In addition to the timeframe for local approvals for funding, the planned schedule for submission of the Massachusetts Historical Commission Project Notification Form, LEED registration, anticipated permitting and regulatory filing dates and requirements, and the prequalification timeframe for bidders are also provided. It was decided and approved by a vote of the MCHSBC during the PSR Phase that a Construction Management at Risk construction delivery method will be utilized. The timeline for approval by the Inspector General's Office and the CMR procurement timeframe is issuance of the RFQ in July 2026 and a CM on board by October 2026.

Should the project gain MSBA and City approval, the timeframe for the various design phases through construction to school opening and closeout of the Project have been indicated. A Meetings and Milestones Schedule that provides a list of all project-related meetings, investigations and milestones and provides the basic agenda is also included.

The Project Team, District and the City have been working closely to ensure that sufficient time is being taken to thoroughly review all data gathered and properly consider all decisions. Throughout the process, the Project Team will notify the MSBA promptly if additional time is needed for any phase and the Project Schedule will be modified as necessary.

The project schedule outlines the following milestone dates:

Preliminary Design Program Submission to MSBA	02.25.2026
Preferred Schematic Submission to MSBA	06.25.2026
MSBA Board Meeting approval to proceed to Schematic Design	08.26.2026
Schematic Design Submission	February 2027*
MSBA Board Meeting for Project Scope and Budget	April 2027*
Projected City of Medford vote to approve funding	May-June 2027*

All dates with an asterisk are tentative until the MSBA 2027 calendar is issued.

A copy of the Updated Project Schedule is included as part of Section 3.3.4 J.

C. Summary of the Final Evaluation of Existing Conditions

During the PSR phase the design team and their consultants conducted the following activities which expanded upon the existing conditions evaluations:

- Completed a Hydrant Flow test.
- Finalized the Geotechnical Report, which included the execution of a geophysical program on site to estimate the relative elevation of sub-surface rock topography across the site
- Completed a limited Phase II Environmental investigation.
- Completed environmental noise testing.
- A geothermal test well is scheduled to be installed at the site this summer.
- A Project Notification Form to the Massachusetts Historical Commission was submitted on June 19, 2026
- An Existing Conditions Site Plan has been included in response to the MSBA's PDP comments
- Additionally, with recent knowledge of the deed restriction on the project site, the design team is working with the City's land use counsel to ensure full understanding of what is allowed in the restricted portions of the property.
- Included in Section 3.3.2, Final Evaluation of Existing Conditions, is a Climate Resiliency Approach, including Risk Assessment and Design Approach to meet the MSBA Guidelines.

More detail on these and the reports are included in Section 3.3.2

D. Summary of the Final Evaluation of Alternatives

Construction Alternatives at PDP

During the Preliminary Design Program phase, the project design team developed a total of twenty-nine (29) design Alternatives to explore opportunities and constraints of a wide range of construction approaches and siting possibilities on all areas of the existing Medford High School site. * The seven (7) blue alternatives below were the subject of the final evaluation by the MCHSBC for the PSR stage of the Feasibility Study.

	A. Code Upgrade	B. Renovation & Addition									
Alternative	A.1	B.1.1	B.1.2	B.2.1	B.2.2	B.3.1	B.3.2	B.4.1	B.4.2	B.5.1	B.6.1	B.6.2
Description	Code Upgrade to Building and Site	Renovate the existing school with some spatial reconfigurations to meet Ed Plan		Selective demolition of Wing A with addition		Selective demolition of Wing A & C with addition		Selective demolition of Wing A , B & C with Addition		Selective Demo of Wing A, B, C, G & H with Addition	Selective Demolition of Wing A, B, G & H with New Addition	

	C. Renovation & Addition												
Alternative	C.1.1	C.1.2	C.1.3	C.1.4	C.2.1	C.2.2	C.2.2A	C.2.2A -HS	C.3.1	C.3.2	C.3.3	C.3.4	C.3.4A
Description	Retain and renovate Gym, Pool and Wing E with new addition on Site 1				Retain and renovate Gym, Pool, and Wing E with new addition on Site 2		Deed restriction compliant version of C.2.2	High School Only version of C.2.2A	Retain and renovate Gym, Pool and Wing E with new addition on Site 3				Deed restriction compliant version of C.3.4

	D. New Construction				
Alternative	D.1.1	D.1.2	D.1.1NP	D.2.1	D.2.1NP
Description	Demolish existing facility; Construct a new building on the parking lot		Same as D.1.1, but with no new Pool building	Demolish existing facility; Construct a new building on Site 2	Same as D.2.1, but with no new Pool building

Construction Alternative Selection for PSR

The design team developed each of the seven (7) final Alternatives during the Preferred Schematic Report phase, with the opportunities and constraints of each option being presented and discussed in many forums, including with the Medford Comprehensive High School Building Committee (MCHSBC), Abutters Meetings, Advisory Teams and several Community Forums among others. The following is a summary of how those Alternatives were evaluated.

Note - all project costs listed below include all high school and non-high school programs, aside from Alternative C.2.2A-HS which includes only costs for high school programs and Alternative D.1.1NP which includes costs for all programs aside from a new Natatorium.

Code Upgrade

A.1 – The base repair and code upgrade alternative of the existing 4-story structure includes no modification of existing spaces nor their function. This option was determined to not meet the educational program, as it does not provide sufficient space for projected growth in student enrollment, does not provide sufficiently sized CTE shop space to meet safety recommendations from DESE, nor would it provide core academic resources (such as general academic classrooms and science labs) that are sufficiently sized to support current and planned curriculum delivery.

Given that the A.1 option does not support the educational program, the City of Medford would not receive any MSBA reimbursement if this Alternative was chosen. This would make the A.1 option one of the more expensive options for the City of Medford, and combined with the lack of the support for the educational program led the MCHSBC to remove this option from consideration.

Project Cost: $529M

Large Renovation and Limited Addition

B.1.2 – Full Renovation of the majority of the existing building with spatial reconfigurations, replacement of the Performing Arts (A) Wing with a new addition and two (2) new addition floors above the existing Vocational Wing and a portion of the PE/Dining Wing. This is a 5-story structure.

Project Cost: $811M

This alternative would be capable of delivering highly functional educational environments with interdisciplinary adjacencies amongst academic and CTE programming by eliminating the physical constraints of the existing structure through a holistic re-imagining of the interior environments.

The main reason for this Renovation and Addition scenario was advanced to the final evaluation of alternatives by the MCHSBC was the positive environmental outcome of salvaging much of the embodied carbon in the existing structural steel and cast in place concrete frames.

As part of the PSR phase, a preliminary total carbon analysis (combined operational and embodied) was conducted to understand the differences between the two alternatives that preserved the largest portion of the existing building (B.1.2) and that which preserved none of it (D.1.1). This initial study indicated that the embodied carbon that would be preserved in Alternative B.1.2 was approximately equivalent to the embodied carbon within the modular classroom buildings that would be required for the phasing of Alternative B.1.2. This analysis countered the strongest perceived benefit of this option.

Besides having an adverse sustainability impact, the modular classroom buildings were deemed by both district and school administrations as well as the larger community to have a negative impact on the educational experience for teachers and students. This perception combined with an extended construction duration and the highest estimated total project cost led to this alternative being viewed less favorably than others.

Renovation of the Gymnasium and Pool Wings and Larger Addition

C.2.2A – Full renovation of the Gym, Pool and PE/Dining Wings. New Addition for the remainder of the program space to the North, West and South of the renovated wings. The design for this option evolved from the original C.2.2 Alternative to avoid the portion of the property with a deed restriction, while maintaining the original spirit of the C.2.2 Alternative. This is a 6-story structure.

Project Cost: $795M

C.2.2A-HS – This option reflects the same Renovation and Addition strategy as Alternative C.2.2A, but omits any program spaces aside from those that support Grade 9-12 high school education. This Alternative was added for consideration as part of the Final Evaluation of Alternatives as requested by the MSBA in their May 5, 2026 PDP review comments. This is a 5-story structure.

Project Cost: $697M

C.3.4A – Full renovation of the Gym and Pool Wings. New Addition for the remainder of the program space to the North, West and South of the renovated wings, wrapping completely around the existing Gym. The design for this option evolved from the original C.3.4 Alternative to avoid the portion of the property with a deed restriction, while maintaining the original spirit of the C.3.4 Alternative. This is a 5-story structure.

Project Cost: $807M

Similar to the B.1.2 alternative with a larger extent of renovated space, these alternatives would be capable of delivering highly functional educational environments with interdisciplinary adjacencies amongst academic and CTE programming. These design objectives would be largely achieved through the construction of the addition that would be located adjacent to the high value resources in the renovated areas.

There was substantial deliberation amongst the MCHSBC during the June 10, 2026 meeting to identify the advantages of some of the C options over others. The more compact building footprint of Alternative C.3.4A was seen as a positive to minimize travel time for students between destinations, and the increased site area would allow for greater options for site elements such as battery storage farms. The compact footprint would also require a larger percentage of photovoltaic panels to be located at grade instead of the roof of the building, requiring greater initial capital costs for ground mounted canopies to provide a Net Zero Energy capacity of solar panels.

One of the deciding factors between the C.2.2A and C.3.4A options ended up being the ability of the building geometry to facilitate oversight of the learning environment by staff. The curved geometry of C.3.4A was seen to be challenging in this regard, while the more linear geometry of the C.2.2A option was deemed to be preferable.

And while the total project cost of C.2.2A-HS option was noted to be advantageous when compared to both the C.2.2A and C.3.4A options, there was concern about un-housing non-high school related programs that are currently located within the building without having a plan for where those programs would go. So rather than selecting the C.2.2A-HS option, the MCHSBC and the City agreed to conduct a more detailed study over the course of the summer to determine the viability and cost of potentially moving non-high school programs out of the building. The non-high school related programs do not impact the Educational Program for the school, so the additional time needed to determine if cost efficiencies for the City could be realized was determined to be the best course of action.

New Construction

D.1.1 – New Construction on the existing southern Parking Lot and the southern portion of the existing building footprint. This is a 5-story structure.

Project Cost: $766M

D.1.1NP – This is the same as Alternative D.1.1, with the exception of the new stand-alone Natatorium building, as is required by MSBA Project Advisory 96.

Project Cost: $742M

The New Construction Alternatives would be capable of delivering highly functional educational environments with interdisciplinary adjacencies amongst academic and CTE programming, and the total project cost for this option was lower than many of the addition renovation scenarios.

There were however several challenges identified with the D.1.1 option (and by association the D.1.1NP option) that eventually led to them not being selected by the MCHSBC. With the massing of the building positioned so close to the entrance to the site (known as Steve Miller Drive), the Medford Police Department indicated that it would present a safety concern in the event of an emergency, as it would block visibility across the remainder of the site and present the potential of a bottleneck for site circulation. Beyond this concern from public safety personnel, the required reduction in the size of the gymnasium, as well as the potential loss of the pool resource due to the need for a separate ballot question presented concerns. In the final deliberation, the lower total project cost for these options did not outweigh the other challenges that they presented.

E. Summary of the District's Preferred Solution

On June 10, 2026 the Medford Comprehensive High School Building Committee (MCHSBC) selected the **C.2.2A Addition and Renovation Alternative** as the Preferred Solution.

In summary, there were five major guiding criteria identified by the MCHSBC that contributed to the C.2.2A approach being selected:

Educational Experience – the building massing and geometry will provide increased visibility and sightlines throughout the interior environments to enhance school operations and facilitate supervision. The massing also maximizes access to daylight for educational environments.

Preservation of Valued Resources – renovation of the existing large gymnasium, pool and several alternative PE spaces such as the Gymnastics Gym preserves resources that hold high value for the school and larger Medford community.

Support of City Public Safety – both the Medford Police and Medford Fire Departments indicated their support for the C.2.2A Alternative given the location of the building on the site and full perimeter vehicular circulation around the building footprint.

Cost Effectiveness – The cost of Alternative C.2.2A was the lowest of the full-program Addition & Renovation options being considered as part of the Final Evaluation of Alternatives. While the "high school only" C.2.2A-HS option did represent a lower first cost, the MCHSBC was uncomfortable with un-housing non-high school programs currently located in the building without having a valid plan for where these programs might be relocated to. Over the course of the summer the City of Medford will be conducting a space availability study across the City to determine if viable alternative locations exist, and what it might cost the City to relocate non-high school programs. The MCHSBC will decide at their October 6, 2026 meeting to confirm which (if any) non-high school programs will not continue to be located at Medford High School in the future.

Minimized Disruption - Alternative C.2.2A can avoid the use of modular classroom buildings during construction, which mitigates impacts to learning during construction and avoids non-reimbursable costs. It also avoids the potential environmental impact of using "disposable" resources.

F. MSBA PDP Review and District Response

Medford submitted the PDP to the MSBA on February 25, 2026 and received a response on May 5, 2026.

Medford returned its response on May 19, 2026, and a copy is included in the Appendix A to this report.

All items noted for inclusion in the PSR have been incorporated into this report.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation for the Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (FAS) is attached separately to this report.