

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING PROPOSAL—FAQ

ABOUT THE PROJECT

What does the project involve?

A new Public Safety Building would house Yarmouth Fire-Rescue and Yarmouth Police Department. The new building would include a multi-use room that would provide shared meeting and training space, and serve as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for hazard and emergency-response teams. The space that the Police vacate in Town Hall would be reused for Yarmouth Community Services (YCS).

How much will it cost?

The project would cost an estimated \$8.5 million according to [Port City Architects](#), a consultant that has been working with the Town's steering committee.

Why do we need a new Fire Station? It doesn't seem like we have that many fires.

Yarmouth Fire-Rescue/EMS has outgrown its 42-year-old station and trailer. It lacks meeting, storage, sleeping accommodations, and other facilities it needs to recruit, train, and retain staff and volunteers. As the community grows, demand on the station is growing too.

- **There are more calls overall.** Yarmouth-Fire Rescue responded to nearly 1700 calls in 2017 vs. 250 calls in 1976 when the station opened.
- **There is a growing volume of medical calls.** Last year, 65% of calls (1,169) were medical emergencies. Those calls are expected to rise with the growth of the community and demographic shifts. It is anticipated that a third ambulance will eventually be needed to meet the growing volume of medical calls.
- **There is not enough space for fire trucks and ambulances.** When the fire station was built in 1976, the department had 5 vehicles, the longest of which was 17-feet long. Today, Yarmouth Fire-Rescue has 7 vehicles, which are up to 45-feet long. Ambulances were 17 feet in 1976 are now up to 26-feet long. The station garage is cramped, which creates exhaust issues and hazards for firefighters. The department will outgrow this space within the next 5 years.

Why does Yarmouth Police need new space?

Yarmouth Police lacks enough secure storage for records and evidence, vehicles, and the room to meet increasingly-complex law-enforcement protocols. Like Fire-Rescue, Police need meeting space and modern facilities to recruit, train, and retain staff.

What is an Emergency Operations Center and why do we need one?

Police and Fire Departments have no permanent Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a central location where they can coordinate all hazard emergency response together with other first responders like State Police, FBI, Maine and Cumberland County Emergency Management. This is needed for emergencies like shootings, natural disasters, widespread power outages, and HAZMAT incidents. The EOC would provide a 24-hour secure facility equipped with a generator, phones, TVs, and access for computer and radios that connect all agencies involved. It would also have sleeping quarters to accommodate emergency responders for extended periods.

An EOC is a widely-recognized best practice in emergency management. Because Yarmouth lacks a permanent EOC, during major incidents in recent years—like the explosion at the Gables and the fire at 500 Route 1—investigators from multiple agencies spent months using makeshift workarounds.


Why does Yarmouth Community Services need new space?

Yarmouth Community Services (YCS) occupies a 1200-square-foot trailer that is in severe disrepair, and cannot accommodate its growing staff, services, and programs. YCS moved into the trailer 18 years ago when it provided just adult education & recreation. Since then, YCS has expanded its services in accordance with the mission and changing needs of the Town to include social outreach & senior services, while increasing the number of recreation programs, before- and after-school care, special events, & Town services.

How did this proposal come about?

Over the past 15 to 30 years, Fire, Police, and YCS have been grappling with inadequate, aging, cramped facilities. In 2016, a steering committee was formed to evaluate the needs. In 2017, Town Council approved money to hire a consultant, and retained [Port City Architecture which has helped](#) Cumberland, Falmouth, Saco, and many others on projects like these. In November 2017, after considering Town, school, & community needs, Town Council directed the steering committee to pursue the “Green Option,” that would bring Fire & Police under one shared Public Safety Building. This foresight produced significant savings in land costs, and the ability to reuse the current Police Department for YCS. The committee worked with Port City to refine details of the Green Option.

Who is on the Steering Committee?

- Ron Barker, Resident, Retired Superintendent of Yarmouth Schools
- Randall Bates, Resident, Former Town Council Member
- Jeff Darrell, Resident, Former Town Council Member 
- Dan Gallant, Police Sergeant

- Bill Goddard, Resident, Volunteer Deputy Chief
- Steve Johnson, Town Engineer
- Karyn MacNeill, Resident, YCS Director
- Dan Masselli, Deputy Fire Chief
- Don McGilvery, Resident, Construction Manager
- Lincoln Merrill, Chief Executive of Patriot Insurance
- Michael Morrill, Resident, Police Chief
- Michael Robitaille, Fire Chief
- Darryl Watkins, Resident, Retired Police Sergeant
- Brent Williams, Resident, Volunteer Firefighter
- Jen Van Allen, Resident, Communications Assistant

TIMING

When would construction start, and when would it be done?

If the voters approve the project in November 2018 election, construction would likely begin in Spring 2019, and be completed in the Spring of 2020.

During construction, how will Fire-Rescue respond to calls?

It is anticipated that Fire and EMS administration and response staff would be temporarily relocated to a Town-owned property at 52 North Road and the vehicles and equipment would be relocated next door to the Public Works Facility at 56 North Road.

COSTS AND FINANCING

How would this be paid for?

The Town would issue bonds, just as it has for other projects like road improvements, the library, and the Public Works garage. The Town would repay the bonds over 20 or 30 years. The bonds would be repaid with revenue generated by property taxes.

Is a new Fire and Police station the cheapest option? What are the other options?

The steering committee and Port City Architects evaluated a number of options and costs. The committee unanimously endorsed Option 1. Some of the factors included:

- **Time and cost savings.** It would cost an \$300,000 **more** to keep the 3 current Fire Station bays. Construction would also take longer.
- **Accommodations during construction.** During construction, Fire-Rescue trucks, staff & equipment could be relocated to the Public Works Garage and adjacent Town owned property at 52 North Road. That means the Town would not have to pay to rent space elsewhere, and emergency response times would not be impacted by construction.
- **Inflation and remobilization costs.** Growth trends indicate that Police will need an expansion in the future. There is no room to expand on the current site at Town Hall. If the Town waits 5 years to do the Police station it will cost roughly \$1 million more than doing it now due to inflation and the cost of remobilizing contractors. If we wait 5 years, it will cost residents \$3.2 million to \$3.5 million. If we build a new Police station now, it will

cost. \$2.3 million.

5 Options Evaluated

Option	Features	Cost (millions)	Cost Per Square foot
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demolish Fire station. ● Rebuild station to house Fire, Police ● Create EOC & shared training/meeting space. ● Move YCS to space Police now occupy. 	\$8.5	\$282
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Renovate Fire station. ● Reuse 3 existing bays for fire trucks & ambulances. ● Police move to new building. ● Create EOC & shared training/meeting space. ● Move YCS to space Police now occupy. 	\$8.8	\$292
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demolish station for Fire-Rescue ● Create shared multi-use space for training, meeting, EOC ● Police remain at Town Hall ● YCS remains decentralized 	\$6.0	\$271
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Renovate station for Fire-Rescue ● Reuse bays for trucks & ambulances ● Create shared multi-use space for training, meeting, EOC ● Police remain at Town Hall ● YCS remains decentralized 	\$6.4	\$293
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rebuild station for Fire-Rescue ● No multi-use space for training, meeting, EOC ● Police remain at Town Hall ● YCS remains decentralized 	\$5.5	\$276

How does the proposed Public Safety building compare to similar projects?

	Cost/Square Foot	Size (Square Footage)	Project Scope	Project Completion
Scarborough	\$385	50,614	Police & Fire	TBD
Wells	\$360	40,300	Police & Fire	TBD

Falmouth	\$312	8,000	Police, with renovations to Fire	2008
Sanford	\$306	18,000	Police Only	2010
Yarmouth	\$282	30,174 SF	Police, Fire, EOC, YCS	2021
Saco	\$268	22,000	Fire Only	2011
Waterville	\$259	12,336	Police Only	2013
Cumberland	\$248	16,558	Fire Only	2017

What would it cost to operate this new station?

According to estimates by Port City Architects and the Town Engineer, the new facility would cost about \$13,000 more per year to operate than the current facilities. This includes heat, electricity, phone, cleaning & scheduled maintenance for elevators.

Can we use less-expensive materials?

While there may be ways to decrease the initial cost of the building using different materials such as wood or vinyl siding, there are other metrics that should be considered in the lifecycle cost of any selected material. For example, wood siding, while likely a lower initial cost than brick or masonry, will have a significantly-shorter design life and will require much higher periodic maintenance costs, such as painting. Other considerations that play include durability (such as survivability of a hurricane or unusual weather event, wildfire or even an explosion such as the incident that occurred at Gables Drive.) Another key consideration of material selection, especially for Police, protection from attack with firearms, vehicles or explosives. From a safety and lifecycle perspective, masonry provides a much better protection.

	Expected Life (Years)	Estimated Cost/SF (material + labor) 2018	Expected Maintenance over 50 years	Estimated Maintenance cost/SF	Total Life Cycle Cost Per SF Per year for 50-Year Building
Brick	100	\$21	None	\$0	\$0.21
Vinyl	35	\$8	Replacement	\$8	\$0.32
Fiber Cement	50	\$11	Paint (3 times over 50 years)	\$9	\$0.40

Aluminum	50	\$35	None	\$0	\$0.70
Wood	25	\$8	Paint (10 times over 50 years) & Replacement	\$38	\$0.92

LEARN MORE

- See all documents related to the project at yarmouth.me.us/publicsafety
- Contact Fire Rescue [Chief Mike Robitaille](#) at 846-2410
- Contact Police Chief Dan Gallant at dgallant@yarmouth.me.us or 846-3333
- Contact Yarmouth Community Services Director [Karyn MacNeill](#) at kmacneill@yarmouth.me.us or 846-2406