

# MELROSE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Final Report



July 2023

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# Melrose Public Safety Buildings Committee

## Final Report 2023

**It has been almost 60 years since the last public safety building was built in Melrose. With each passing decade, staffing, equipment, vehicles, and standards have changed. Yet, the city's police and fire stations have remained the same. The current state of these buildings necessitates action. This report details the process and path forward proposed by the 2023 Public Safety Buildings Committee (PSBC).**

### Summary

The City of Melrose is home to three fire stations and one police station. In addition to emergency response, these buildings house several programs and essential services that benefit the community and surrounding areas (e.g, domestic violence support, substance abuse and social work services, emergency medical services (EMS), etc.). Central Fire, the oldest and most historically significant of the four public safety buildings, was originally built to accommodate horse drawn carriages. This Main Street building dates back to 1895. Melrose Fire Engine 2 on Tremont Street and Engine 3 on East Foster Street, were built in 1929 and 1964, respectively. The Melrose Police Department, which once operated from

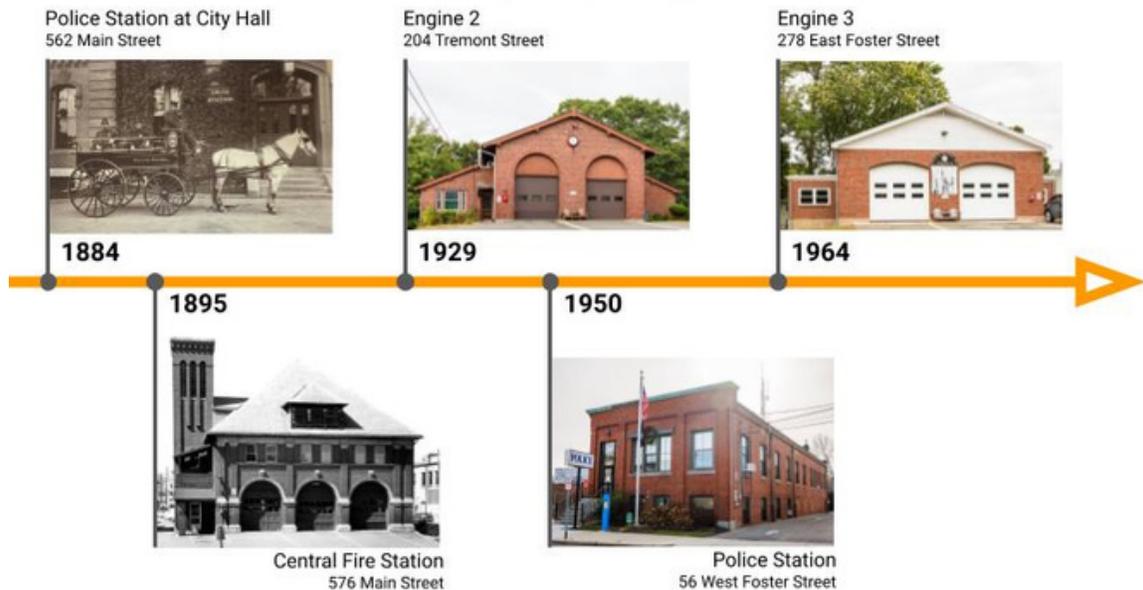
the basement of City Hall, has occupied the former telephone exchange company building on West Foster Street for the past 72 years. That building was constructed in 1907.<sup>1</sup>

These buildings, like the men and women that have lived and worked within their walls, have served the community well for multiple generations. However, like many of our neighboring communities, Melrose is facing the consequences of decades of underinvestment and deferred maintenance on facilities that have, by 2023, far exceeded their intended purpose and usable lives. And while typically, cities and towns address one building at a time, the state of disrepair on all four public safety buildings in Melrose necessitates that immediate action be taken concurrently. Melrose Police and Fire Departments operate from facilities that are outdated, undersized, unhygienic, non-code compliant, and incapable of supporting 21st Century police and fire programming or the high-quality community services these departments strive to provide.



<sup>1</sup> "Melrose Telephone Exchange Moves to New Building" The Boston Globe, March 25, 1907, p. 4.

## Timeline of Public Safety Buildings in Melrose



The city’s public safety building needs are well-documented. Addressing myriad facility inadequacies across both departments requires substantial public investment in four new buildings that can grow with the community. Such investment must be backed by a decision rooted in a process of multi-department collaboration and sustained public engagement. It is clear from public input gathered through this phase of work that Melrose residents are broadly supportive of prioritizing these needs.

Understandably, the public desires a well-informed solution that is comprehensive and reflects deep consideration of costs and prospective tax impacts on residents alongside benefits and tradeoffs. It is with this in mind that the Public Safety Building Committee (PSBC) was reconstituted by Mayor Paul Brodeur in the Fall of 2021 and began meeting in January 2022.

The 11-member committee includes residents, city personnel, representatives of the Melrose Police Patrol Officers Association and Melrose Firefighters IAFF Local 1617, as well as the chiefs of Police and Fire. While each member brought particular perspectives and expertise to the table, the committee benefited immensely from the nearly 100 years of combined police and fire service experience and expertise brought to bear by the representatives of these two departments. For over a year, the PSBC has studied the need to upgrade our community’s police and fire facilities, working to identify opportunities for improvement and an optimal path forward for the City of Melrose to pursue.

The PSBC is grateful for the opportunity to inform public discourse through this effort and has taken seriously the committee’s charge to present to the Mayor’s office

and City Council a solution to public safety building deficiencies that is comprehensive and durable.

This report is the culmination of 18 months of committee collaboration.

After rigorous review and thoughtful consideration of department needs and community interests, **the committee has determined that the City of Melrose should invest in three new/renovated fire stations and a new police station, preferably at an existing city-owned site.** The solution detailed in this report meets the current and future needs of the Police and Fire Departments with four new/renovated stations built to serve the community for the next 50 years. It also eliminates the need for land acquisition which would increase the cost and duration of the effort and limits impact on current, exemplary response times by the Fire Department. Additionally, this report includes a plan to phase and sequence implementation to minimize disruption to public safety services during construction and limit costly investments in temporary facilities.

The committee recognizes that this will be a substantial undertaking, particularly because it is one of several necessary community investments on the horizon that will require public support and funding. However, upgrades and modernization to Melrose Police and Fire buildings are urgently needed. In some cases, the facilities could become dangerously unsafe without significant capital investment.

Delayed action will only bring increased cost for future replacement, pose additional risks to the well-being of our police and fire personnel, leave residents vulnerable in emergency situations, and further undermine the departments' ability to meet community needs efficiently and effectively.

## Context

### Achieving an Optimal Solution

Guided by the space needs and professional standards of modern police and fire services, this committee has reached consensus in its determination that in order to achieve this objective, the City of Melrose must significantly renovate and add to Central Fire, rebuild and expand Melrose Engines 2 and 3, and relocate and rebuild the Police Station. Please refer to the space needs analysis in Attachment 2.

**This four-building construction project will be phased over seven years, including public approval and the design phase during the initial years. The projected cost for a project of this scale is approximately \$130 million.**

A debt exclusion, which requires public approval, is the mechanism for financing a municipal capital project like this. The cost estimates, timelines, and phasing detailed in this report are based on passage of a debt exclusion on the November 2023 ballot. Any delay to the proposed timeframe will require an update to projected costs.

## Constraints & Considerations

Several constraints underpin this committee's determination that a four-building project is the optimal solution.

- **Space Needs:** Meeting space requirements was a primary consideration of the PSBC's efforts. Based on preliminary-design analysis, square footage needed to enable code compliance, to properly accommodate and store equipment and apparatus, house personnel, and allow for growth in both departments totals about 96,000 square feet. In aggregate, existing facilities total 35,700 square feet, which is about a third of what the Police and Fire Departments need. Please refer to the space needs analysis in Attachment 2.
- **Historic Designation of Central Fire:** The Central Fire building is historically registered at the municipal, state, and federal levels. This significantly limits any ability to alter the building beyond renovations required to bring it up to code. Consequently, additional square footage needed by Melrose Fire Department must be obtained by adding to the footprints of Engines 2 and 3.
- **Response Times:** Fire station location is critical to complying with response time standards mandated by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). NFPA Standard 1710 requires a response time of within six minutes or less, 90 percent of the time. Presently, Melrose Fire Department consistently meets or exceeds this standard. Additionally, the Insurance Service Office (ISO) is a nationally set standard. The ISO score is based on results of the Public Protection Classification (PPC) survey and onsite review that includes comparison of community risks to what the fire district provides in fire suppression including geographic distribution of stations. The ISO score can affect the insurance premium of every homeowner in the community. Response times would be adversely affected by the elimination of a fire station which would jeopardize the department's ability to comply with NFPA 1710, potentially impacting the safety of Melrose residents. Elimination of a station would also potentially jeopardize the city's ISO rating.
- **Department Consolidation:** The PSBC revisited a previous proposal to consolidate police and fire into a single Public Safety Building. After careful consideration, including of the unique requirements of each department, it was determined that a combined Public Safety Building would require a large tract of land. Large, open or available parcels of land is a significant constraint in Melrose.
- **Dispatch Consolidation:** The public safety building committees in 2017 and 2023 both considered consolidating police and fire dispatch. However, it was determined combining department communications was unlikely to achieve significant cost savings or immediate operational efficiency. Over time, efficient operations of a consolidated dispatch would require increased staffing/personnel. Rather than consolidating police and fire dispatch, the

more desirable solution, and the approach that would enable more nimble community response in an emergency situation, is for Melrose to establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at a revamped Tremont Street Station.

- **Location of Police Station:** Although the current police station is centrally located, space requirements necessitate a larger building. There is no room for sufficient expansion at the present site. Modern policing has evolved such that unlike the Fire Department, the location of the police station is not critical for response times to calls throughout the city. Police officers are out on patrol throughout the city at any given time. Thus, the Melrose Police Department is not reliant on a central location to function optimally or respond to emergencies in a timely way.
- **Land Acquisition:** As noted, large, open, or available parcels of land capable of accommodating a new building in a new location are a significant constraint within Melrose. Acquiring property that is not already owned by the city will be costly and any process could significantly delay project development. Therefore, the committee limited its consideration to prospective parcels currently owned by the city as identified by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Planning Department.

Final costs will ultimately be driven by the final project design, and there will be opportunities to fine tune the details of the project to look for potential cost saving adjustments. However, there are external market dynamics beyond the control of the City that influence and drive costs as well.

- **Cost premium within the I-95 belt.** Similar to other cities and towns within the Boston metropolitan area, construction costs in Melrose incur a premium for its proximity to Boston (based on industry standard, historical construction cost indexes). Comparing Melrose's effort to upgrade its public safety buildings to other communities outside of this region would not be sensible.
- **Pandemic-era Construction Costs.** While the pandemic may be officially declared as over, the impact to the construction industry will continue to be felt in the next few years with higher than usual inflation, limited product options, and longer lead times.

## 2017 Feasibility Study & Assessment

In 2017, under the Dolan administration, the City of Melrose commissioned Dore+Whittier Architects, Inc. to conduct a feasibility study and assessment of the community's four public safety facilities. Dore+Whittier focused on reviewing the existing facilities and their respective space needs at the time, considering and highlighting opportunities for investment and necessary improvements to provide "adequate facilities for both the City of Melrose Fire and Police Departments." The study concluded that the buildings had become "outdated, unsafe, and required significant and substantial repair."

This initial study, though thorough, was constrained from the outset by scope limitations and a target budget of less than \$40 million — an amount that, even in 2017 dollars, was grossly inadequate to address growing deficiencies across four buildings, much less to plan for the future. The imposition of a desired outcome significantly hampered the 2017 committee's ability to allow police and fire needs and compliance with national standards to drive the discussion. Relatedly, the 2017 study did not result in an implementable solution capable of fully addressing identified needs. Beyond standard maintenance, no further action was taken to address disrepair in each of the facilities. Inaction is costly. Conditions have only worsened in the 5+ years since that effort was completed.

## Public Safety Buildings Committee Charge & Process

The Melrose PSBC was re-established by Mayor Brodeur in late 2021 to provide recommendations for how to renovate or replace the City's public safety buildings. Together, the PSBC reviewed the 2017 feasibility and assessment study completed by Dore+Whittier Architects, Inc. The committee provided progress reports to Melrose City Council, held two open houses for community members to tour the current police and fire facilities, and posted videos to enable virtual tours on the [PSBC website](#). The committee also held two public meetings to present pre-design findings, answer questions, and solicit feedback from the community.<sup>2</sup>

**2023**

## Public Safety Buildings Committee

- 11 volunteer members
- 18-months of collaboration
- 40+ full committee meetings
- 20+ subcommittee meetings
- 12+ preliminary design meetings w/ Dore + Whittier (architects)
- 2 public learning sessions
- 3 City Council updates
- 2 open houses

Information gathered throughout this process has informed the conclusions drawn by the PSBC. The findings conveyed in this final report represent necessary public investment required to ensure the Melrose Fire Department and Melrose Police Department are equipped with facilities that are safe, functional, comply with modern codes and standards, meet current space needs while allowing for future growth, and ultimately enable these departments to provide 21st century public safety services to the Melrose community.

PSBC members agreed to operate by consensus, meaning that this report reflects the “consent, or general agreement of all members, as arrived at after committee discussion.” In addition to agreeing to operate by consensus, the PSBC established a set of project principles to guide its deliberation and define the success of the committee’s goal of addressing immediate needs with buildings that can serve and grow with the community for decades to come.

The committee's principles of an optimal solution are described below.

The PSBC divided its work into two phases. During Phase 1: Proposal Development & Pre-Design/Planning, the PSBC established project design principles and worked closely with Dore & Whittier to assess department needs, survey personnel, and determine space estimates and preliminary costs. This phase of work was led by Emmanuel Andrade (Architect/Planner), Elena Proakis Ellis (Melrose Department of Public Works), Denise Gaffey (Melrose Planning Office), Paul Norton and Dale Parsons (Melrose Police Department), and John McCarron (Melrose Fire Department).

During Phase 2: Solution Development, the PSBC synthesized the information gathered through Phase 1, working to further refine space needs and arrive at more precise cost estimates. Also during this period, the committee worked with the city to understand mechanisms to finance municipal capital projects, initiated preliminary outreach and education, and worked to develop an optimal solution consistent with project principles and the committee’s charge.

### **An optimal solution will:**

- Be comprehensive and thorough.
- Be supported by and understandable for the public.
- Balance benefits/tradeoffs with costs, including prospective tax impacts on residents.
- Be long-term, durable, and implementable.
- Limit disruption to fire and police services at all stages of implementation.
- Optimize existing sites/building locations.

## 2022 – 2023 Assessment of Need

The 2017 study did provide a valuable starting point for the PSBC. After reviewing the report closely, the committee requested that the city re-engage Dore+Whittier to complete a comprehensive pre-design process during the Winter 2022 and Spring of 2023. Unlike the 2017 assessment, the PSBC did not restrict exploration of solutions through the pre-design process. Instead, the PSBC overwhelmingly agreed to move forward with a thorough assessment of department needs consistent with committee project principles. This included leading with maintaining Fire Department compliance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Insurance Service Office (ISO) regulations and the Police Department's compliance with best practices set by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission.

The table below details the notable differences between the 2017 study and the 2023 pre-design results. Most specifically, spacing needs and total square footage for both departments were significantly underestimated in the 2017 study. This underestimation contributed to a proposal to reduce the number of fire stations in Melrose from three to two by combining Central Fire and Engine 2 and making no changes in square footage at Engine 3. However, Melrose lacks available land large enough to accommodate a consolidated facility. Moreover, as discussed in the Proposed Solutions section, eliminating a fire station is unfeasible because doing so will adversely impact NFPA-mandated response time standards, which could potentially affect Melrose's ISO score.

### Preliminary Square Footage

Stations	Gross Square Feet (GSF)		
	Existing	Proposed in 2017	Proposed in 2023
<b>Police Station</b>	7,100	24,100	30,600
<b>Central Fire</b>	14,000	23,200	18,700
<b>Engine 2</b>	7,400		27,200
<b>Engine 3</b>	7,200	7,200	19,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35,700</b>	<b>54,500</b>	<b>96,000</b>

**Notes:**

- GSF refers to everything within building footprint: walls, corridors, stairs, utility spaces, etc.
- In 2017, Central Fire and Engine 2 were planned as one single station.
- In 2017, Engine 3 was planned to be renovated but not expanded.
- 'Proposed in 2023' indicates preliminary areas; GSF still in development.

To further determine total project costs based on the results of a needs-based pre-design exercise, the committee, together with Dore+Whittier, issued a 90-question survey to police and fire personnel. The response rates were high and, as illustrated below, results highlighted particular work-place hazards and facility deficiencies that impact personnel daily.

## FD Personnel Feedback

*"None of our HVAC properly works leaving [temps] as low as 58 on winter days and as hot as 83 on summer days...**plumbing issues throughout** the building."*

*"There is **mold**. The ceilings **leak**."*

*"Current[ly] there is **no adequate place to train** firefighters in a classroom setting. The stations are **inadequate for modern day fire apparatus/equipment**..."*

*"**Privacy** for fire personal, **handicap accessibility**, apparatus space in the buildings for all equipment..."*

*"**Build new stations**. Ones that have reliable HVAC systems...kitchens that make sense...better lighting..."*

## PD Personnel Feedback

*"Our building is in every way **not fit for a 21st century** law enforcement agency. This is **impairing our ability to serve the public** in a professional manner, while also **reducing morale/quality of life** within workspace."*

*"The existing building is **far too small**. We lack the space and amenities expected of a workplace. We have **no ADA access**, no classroom, we have multiple senior administrative **personnel sharing offices**..."*

*"...almost **every room** in our building serves as a **multiple purpose room**..."*

*"The Melrose Police Department building as it exists now is **undersized in all facets**."*

## Proposed Solution

In total, the 2023 preliminary square footage assessment identified a need of 96,000 gross square feet (GSF). While this number will be more refined through a full design process, what is indisputable is that insufficient square footage at each of the four existing buildings hampers Fire and Police Department functionality and inhibits both departments' ability to adhere to professional standards of modern fire and police services, to comply with public accessibility codes, and to meet modern workplace health and safety standards.

The challenges attributed to undersized and outdated facilities will be addressed by significantly renovating and partially expanding Central Fire, reconstructing and expanding Melrose Engines 2 and 3, and relocating and reconstructing the Police Station.

<b>Police Station (open in 2027)</b>	<b>Fire Stations (open in 2027 - 2030)</b>
<p>A new police station is proposed on a new site, possibly at 94 Lebanon Street, the location of the Ripley School,* at the intersection with Forest Street.</p> <p>Total Square footage = 27,400 GSF**</p> <p><i>* The Ripley School building would be demolished as part of this proposal.</i></p> <p><i>** Inclusion of a firing range (as an ancillary structure detached from the new Police Station) would add an additional 3,200 GSF to 27,400 GSF for a total of 30,600 GSF.</i></p>	<p>Two new fire stations plus one renovated fire station are proposed; all fire stations would remain at their current locations.</p> <p>Central Fire at 576 Main Street Square footage = 18,700 GSF</p> <p>Engine 2 at 204 Tremont Street Square footage = 24,700 GSF</p> <p>Engine 3 at 278 E Foster Street Square footage = 19,500 GSF</p> <p>Total square footage = 62,900 GSF**</p> <p><i>** Inclusion of a maintenance bay at the new Engine 2 would add an additional 2,500 GSF to 62,900 GSF for a total of 65,400 GSF.</i></p>
<p>Total Square Footage of All Stations = 90,300 GSF***</p> <p><i>***Inclusion of a firing range at the new police station and a dedicated maintenance bay at Engine 2 would increase the total to 96,000 GSF.</i></p>	

## Melrose Fire Department (MFD)

A modern fire department needs to be equipped to respond to a variety of circumstances in addition to providing standard fire suppression. In Melrose, the Fire Department and its stations already support water rescue and provide emergency medical response to the community. With updates, MFD stations could provide service and shelter during an extreme emergency or weather event (e.g., hurricane, tornado, Nor'easter). Presently, Melrose Fire Department includes the Fire-based Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system. **Roughly 65% of overall response calls made by MFD are non-fire EMS calls.** The Melrose's EMS system was brought in-house under the Dolan administration in 2010. All revenue generated by this service goes into an ambulance enterprise fund that pays for eight firefighters and EMS equipment, medical supplies, and training. This ambulance enterprise fund is self-sustaining.

Just as in a fire emergency, response time is paramount in a medical emergency. Because Melrose EMS does not have a second ambulance, it relies on a for-profit private ambulance company, Cataldo Ambulance, to provide backup service. However, Cataldo, which provides similar backup service to other communities in the area and which is subject to severe staffing shortages that are impacting all aspects of the medical field, cannot guarantee that an ambulance will be available to Melrose and/or to stage for a potential second medical call, especially on the weekends.

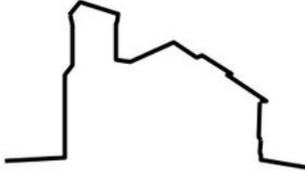
In June 2023, Tower Ladder 1 in Chelsea, which also utilizes Cataldo, waited over 1 hour and 20 minutes for an ambulance to respond to a routine medical call. Long-term, Melrose cannot rely on for-profit, private ambulance companies contracted by multiple communities to provide efficient, rapid emergency medical response. Instead, the city should be planning to add a second ambulance to its daily staffing. Facility updates could accommodate a move in this direction.

### Melrose Fire Department Proposed Solution

Two new fire stations plus one renovated fire station, resulting in a total of 65,400 GSF compared to the current total of 28,600 GSF. (Note: Inclusion of a maintenance bay would add an additional 2,500 SF, for a total of 67,900 GSF.) All fire stations would remain at their current locations. Presupposing November 2023 approval of a ballot initiative, new fire facilities could open/be operational between 2027-2030.

## Melrose Fire Stations

### Central Fire (Headquarters)



576 Main Street (1895)

Central Fire was originally built for horse-drawn equipment to replace an older, smaller fire station from circa 1875 and located across the street. The station (about 14,000 square feet) exists today substantially unchanged from its original configuration with the exception of a deteriorated cupola removed from the tower in 1923.

- Current Square Footage: 14,000 GSF
- Proposed Solution: 18,700 GSF
- $\Delta$  in square footage: +4,700 GSF

### Engine 2



204 Tremont Street (1929)

Engine 2 (about 7,000 square feet) was built to replace an older, smaller fire station from circa 1875 on Franklin Street near the Melrose Highlands train station.

- Current Square Footage: 7,400 GSF
- Proposed Solution: 24,700 GSF
- $\Delta$  in square footage: + 17,300 GSF

### Engine 3



278 E. Foster Street (1964)

Engine 3 (about 7,000 square feet) was built to replace an older, smaller fire station that had existed at the same location since the early 1900s.

- Current Square Footage: 7,200 GSF
- Proposed Solution: 19,500 GSF
- $\Delta$  in square footage: +12,300 GSF

## MFD Constraints & Considerations

**Response Times:** Potential impact on response times is a fundamental consideration/constraint of any Fire Department solution. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1710 requires a response time of within six minutes or less, 90 percent of the time. Presently, Melrose Fire Department consistently meets or exceeds this standard.

Additionally, the Insurance Service Office (ISO) is another nationally set standard. The ISO score is based on results of the Public Protection Classification (PPC) survey and onsite review. This review includes comparison of community risks to what the fire district provides in fire suppression including geographic distribution of stations. The ISO score can affect the insurance premium of every homeowner in the community. Fire station location is critical to achieving/maintaining compliance with these national standards.

**Historic Designation of Central Fire:** The Central Fire building is historically-designated at the municipal, state, and federal levels. Thus it cannot be razed and any ability to alter the building beyond renovations required to bring it up to code are limited. Because of where the current building sits (on land previously filled in), there is also limited ability to expand the building's footprint on the current site. Therefore, much of the proposed improvements are intended to bring the building to code and ensure compliance with modern accessibility and workplace standards.

**Space Needs:** MFD does not have sufficient space to store/garage existing equipment and apparatus, including its bucket truck, decontamination trailer, water rescue boat, and utility trailer. Because of the limitations imposed by Central Fire's historic designation, Fire Department space needs must be met by significantly adding to the footprints of Engines 2 and 3. Please refer to the space needs analysis in Attachment 2.

**Population Density & Grade Crossings:** Response times in Melrose are further complicated by its density and the number of railroad crossings that occur in a short distance. Melrose is very densely populated with approximately 6,074 people per square mile. Wyoming Ave. (Ward 5) is the most populated, highest risk fire section of the city. Fire that spreads rapidly can lead to dangerous outcomes. Train tracks that bisect the city pose an additional challenge to response times. Melrose has one of the most densely concentrated series of grade crossings in the shortest span: three train depots and four crossings in the span of one mile.

**Reduction in Fire Stations:** Reducing the number of fire stations serving the city would be incongruous with the direction many of Melrose's neighboring communities are moving. As a point of reference none of the communities surrounding Melrose are looking to eliminate fire stations. Medford already has more stations than Melrose. Stoneham, Saugus, and Malden are all looking to increase the number of stations to accommodate community needs and meet modern standards.

### MFD Constraints & Considerations (continued)

- Stoneham (pop. 23,077; 6.7 total square miles) – moving from 1 to 2 stations
- Saugus (pop. 28,521; 11.74 total square miles) – moving from 2 to 3 stations
- Malden (pop. 63,042; 5.081 total square miles) – previously decreased from 6 stations to 3 and is now exploring adding a 4th
- Medford (pop. 65,584; 8.66 total square miles) – has six stations

Despite their relatively close proximity to each other, eliminating any one of the three existing fire stations in Melrose would adversely affect response times, which could impact the city's ISO rating, and, most importantly, unnecessarily expose the community to risk and impact business' and residents' safety in an emergency situation.

**Dispatch Consolidation:** Emergency Communications Center (ECC) refers to day-to-day dispatch operations where all emergency incidents, including 911 intake calls, radio traffic, fire alarm activation, burglary calls, etc., are received and managed. Currently, Melrose has a separate ECC for police and fire. The public safety building committees in 2017 and 2023 considered consolidating police and fire dispatch. However, it was determined that combining department communications would not achieve significant cost savings. Furthermore, over time, efficient operations of a consolidated dispatch would require increased staffing/personnel.

Rather than consolidating police and fire dispatch, the more desirable solution, and the approach that would enable more nimble community response in an emergency situation, is for Melrose to establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at a revamped Tremont Street Station. An EOC would complement dispatch at Fire Headquarters and would serve as a central command center, from which all stakeholders (e.g., public safety personnel, DPW, administration officials, Emergency Management, etc.) can operate in the event of a local or state-wide emergency (such as an extreme weather event or public crisis). Redundancy in an emergency situation, or in the event that one of the other ECC locations is compromised, is an additional benefit of retaining dispatch at Fire Headquarters and the Police Department along with establishing an EOC.

Currently, Melrose does not have an EOC. The city has experienced the result of this as recently as June 14, 2023 when an electrical storm moved through the area and knocked out all department communications. The Fire Department had no phones for three hours and operated without radios for 20 hours. During this system failure, there were numerous delays that created a dangerous, potentially hazardous situation for the city's firefighters and residents. If Melrose had an EOC, the department would have opened it and operated normally without delay.

## Notable Deficiencies - MFD Facilities

**Since 2020, the city has spent just over \$200,000 on capital projects at the fire stations.**<sup>3</sup>

This includes \$24,500 in FY20 the city spent shoring up the floor at Central Fire to address concerns about structural integrity of the apparatus bay. Today the rear half of the apparatus bay is open only to pedestrian traffic. This total also includes another \$185,000 in ARPA funding for air conditioning at Central Fire and an addition at Engine 2 for storage of a backup ladder truck. More substantial investment is needed. At Central Fire/Headquarters, slate tiles fall from the roof and bricks are falling from the hose tower. The Tremont Street station regularly experiences basement flooding during rainstorms. Additionally, the station has had raw sewage backup due to outdated plumbing. The basement floor of Engine 3 on E. Foster Street is cracked, which contributes to flooding. Similar to Central Fire, the structural integrity of the apparatus bay floor in Engine 3 is compromised. There is insufficient separation between living quarters in this station and the garage/apparatus facility which puts personnel at risk of additional health concerns.

All three fire stations are grossly undersized and incapable of garaging modern fire apparatus. In some instances, this requires Melrose's fire trucks to be custom designed and built and/or for costly equipment to be stored outdoors where it is exposed to the elements. This is true for the department's bucket truck and decontamination trailer. The bucket truck is a very valuable tool and piece of the MFD fleet. It helps maintain the department's 100 milliamp master box fire alarm system that is in constant operation, even when radios and the phone system fail due to power outages or lightning strikes. The decontamination trailer is to be used at the Melrose-Wakefield Hospital to decontaminate patients who need to access the emergency department after being exposed to a chemical/biological event. It is stored outside at Engine 2. The water rescue boat is not readily accessible because of lack of space at Engine 3. The utility trailer is not readily accessible in the lower garage of Engine 3. This trailer, which was used during the 2015 oil spill on Howard Street, has equipment on board to mitigate large scale events and other long term incidents.

By virtue of the age of the buildings, all three fire stations are energy inefficient and inadequately insulated. Since February 2023, the city's Facilities Department has spent \$50,000 repairing or replacing broken windows at Central Fire. Roof leaks and basement flooding contribute to water damage and mold that must be mitigated and treated regularly. To address rodents in the stations, each building is serviced monthly by a pest control company. None of the buildings are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or have suitable public-facing areas. Nor do any of the buildings include a sufficient training space or decontamination area.

All three fire stations would require a considerable increase of square footage in order to accommodate the Fire Department's space needs for adequate public areas (such as new vestibule and lobby, meeting rooms, and toilet rooms), expanded administration and operations (staff offices, training, apparatus, etc.), improved staff support/living (day room, locker rooms, break room, etc.), modernized building infrastructure (new elevators, utility rooms, storage, etc.). Please refer to the space needs analysis in Attachment 2.

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that this figure reflects only capital expenditures since 2020 and does NOT include expenditures from the operating lines of the Facilities budget that would relate to smaller repairs and work orders at the various public safety buildings. Such analysis will be facilitated by the forthcoming launch of the facilities asset management software.

## Melrose Police Department (MPD)

In recent years, policing has undergone a significant shift towards community-oriented approaches with the goal of fostering stronger relationships between police and the communities they serve and reducing crime as a byproduct of these more established relationships. This change is rooted in the **Six Pillars of 21st Century Policing**. Under the pillar of community policing, law enforcement agencies have prioritized engaging with communities, promoting collaboration, and addressing the underlying causes of crime. This shift in ideology involves officers working closely with community members, listening to their concerns, and involving them in problem-solving initiatives.

In Melrose, the police department has been greatly expanding its community policing model. Melrose Police now hosts an annual Junior Police Academy, participates in National Night Out, has increased its presence on social media platforms, partners with local businesses for Honor Guard events, and will be involved in Faith and Blue activities in fall 2023. The Department is excited to grow its community policing projects and to continue to build trust, expand communication, and be an integral and collaborative partner with the Melrose community.

Modern policing has also evolved such that unlike the Fire Department, the Police Department is not reliant on a central location to function optimally or respond to emergencies in a timely way.

Today, police officers are out on patrol throughout the city at a given time. The city is currently broken down into three sectors and officers are expected to be on mobile patrol during the shift in their assigned sector. The vast majority of Police Department calls for service involve police responding to incoming requests for assistance via 911, non emergency phone line, email, etc. There is very little foot traffic into the station. Police dispatch may field multiple calls for a similar incident (e.g, an accident at a key intersection), but rarely do people walk in to report the same incident in person. Those individuals who do come into the station are typically doing so by appointment for licenses, scheduled meetings, or custodial exchanges.

### Melrose Police Department Proposed Solution

A new, larger police station built at a new site. (The city's current proposal is to build a new police station at the site of the Ripley School.) This would result in a total of 27,400 GSF compared to the current total of 7,100 GSF. (Note: Inclusion of a firing range as a detached building also on the site of the new police station would add an additional 3,200 GSF, for a total of 30,600 GSF.) Presupposing November 2023 approval of a ballot initiative, a new police station could open/be operational as early as 2027.

## MPD Constraints & Considerations

**Six Pillars of 21st Century Policing:** Trust between law enforcement agencies and the people they protect and serve is essential in a democracy. It is key to the stability of our communities, the integrity of our criminal justice system, and the safe and effective delivery of policing services. On December 18, 2014, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The President charged the task force with identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust. The Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommendations, each with action items, are organized around six main topic areas or “pillars”: (1) Building Trust and Legitimacy, (2) Policy and Oversight, (3) Technology and Social Media, (4) Community Policing and Crime Reduction, (5) Officer Training and Education, (6) Officer Safety and Wellness. A modern, 21st century Police Station is integral to achieving these principles, and a new, state-of-the-art police station would be instrumental for the Melrose Police Department and the community to strive towards best practices in achieving the goals of the six pillars of 21st Century Policing. Please refer to Appendix 1 for a full description of the six 1 for a f

**Space Needs:** Space limitations within the current police station do not allow the Police Department to function optimally based upon current best practices in many areas including, but not limited to, training and education, evidence storage, prisoner intake and processing, as well as interviewing and interrogation. There is very little functional space for daily operations with most offices and work spaces being utilized for multiple purposes. The current size also does not allow for any future growth for the increasing demands and mandates placed upon police professionals. The existing building also does not allow the Police Department to easily welcome the public. For example, it does not currently comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please refer to the space needs analysis in Attachment 2.

**Location of Police Station:** Unlike the Fire Department, the location of the police station is not critical for response times to calls throughout the city. Thus, the Melrose Police Department is not reliant on a central location to function optimally or respond to emergencies in a timely way; police officers are out on patrol throughout the city at any given time.

## MPD Constraints & Considerations (continued)

**New Site Selection:** In working with the Mayor’s office, the Planning Department, and the Department of Public Works office, the PSBC has identified the location of the Ripley School at 94 Lebanon Street as a viable and adequate site in Melrose for the new police station. The Ripley School building was built in 1929 as a small neighborhood schoolhouse, and it was closed as a public elementary school in 2001 when some school facilities were consolidated to reflect demographic changes and to make the most efficient use of school buildings. The building, currently leased to an educational collaborative, is reaching the end of its useful life and requires expensive upgrades to remain operational. Measuring 2.09 acres, the lot is large enough to build a 27,400–square–foot, two–story police station, which meets the needs of the Melrose Police Department. This location can also accommodate a separate structure on site for a firing range, which would result in an additional 3,200 square feet for a total of 30,600 square feet. While a site survey and geotechnical investigations must still be performed by the City to confirm property boundaries, topography, and soil conditions, Dore+Whittier has indicated that the lot may support the construction of the proposed new Police Station, and it contains many advantages with its corner location and adequate space for parking. During the design phase of the New Police Station, the City should perform a traffic study to evaluate site circulation and potential traffic impacts and engage with a landscape engineer to create a landscape plan with ample trees and plantings to address changes to existing landscaping that may be necessary for the new building.

**From a budget perspective, utilizing this city–owned property offers a significant cost–saving opportunity for this project.** Further, acquisition of new land would likely impact the project schedule and delay construction. Other city–owned properties were reviewed as potential relocation sites, but none were appropriately sized to meet the requirements for a new Police Station. While the location on the Southern border of Melrose is not as centrally located as the current police station on West Foster Street, the Police Department is not reliant on a central location to function optimally or respond to emergencies in a timely way; police officers are out on patrol throughout the city at any given time. Unlike the Fire Department, the location of the police station is not critical for response times to calls throughout the city.

### **Melrose Police Station**

56 W. Foster Street

Since as early as 1884, when it occupied a small space at City Hall, Melrose’s Police Department has never had a facility specifically designed to meet its needs. In fact, by 1916, the City Hall police station was referred to as “the smallest police headquarters in any city of the size of Melrose in the United States.”<sup>4</sup> Later, in 1950, the Department transitioned to the former telephone switchboard building at 56 West Foster Street that, today, is a quarter of the size (about 7,000 square feet) of a modern police station for a city the size of Melrose.

4. “Melrose Police ‘Cheese Box’”, The Boston Post, September 18, 1916, p. 7.

### Notable Deficiencies - MPD Facility

Since 2020, the City of Melrose has spent \$19,000 on a Police Department Locker Room project to build out male and female locker rooms<sup>4</sup> This was primarily funded through DWP operating funds. Like the fire stations, Melrose Police Station is deficient in a number of ways that challenges the department's ability to adhere to professional standards of modern policing and to meet modern workplace health and safety standards.

Deficiencies include:

- Inadequate/unsafe detainee intake/processing
- Inadequate cell block to hold prisoners placed in custody
- Inadequate evidence processing and storage
- Not ADA Compliant (No wheelchair accessibility to the building)
- No Public Restrooms
- No Private conference room/area for walk in reports
- No "welcome desk" for walk in reports/visitors
- No Training or Community Room
- No Executive Conference Room for staff meetings/trainings
- No Wellness Center
- No Roll Call Room
- No Separate shower facilities for male/female employees
- No Break Room facilities
- Inadequate dedicated interview/interrogation rooms
- Inadequate staff and public parking
- Asbestos exposure
- Inadequate Heating/Cooling systems
- Recurring power/Information Technology issues (phones/radios/servers)

Similar to the fire stations, the police station would require a considerable increase of square footage in order to accommodate the Police Department's space needs for adequate public areas (such as new vestibule and lobby, meeting rooms, and toilet rooms), expanded administration and operations (staff offices, training, investigation, etc.), improved staff support/living (fitness room, locker rooms, break room, etc.), modernized building infrastructure (new elevators, utility rooms, storage, etc.). Please refer to the space needs analysis in Attachment 2.

# Project Sequencing & Construction Phasing

Bringing Melrose’s four public safety buildings into the 21st century would be an effort spanning approximately seven years, from the design of the first buildings (the new Police Station and new Engine 2) until the construction and occupancy of the last building (new Engine 3). Close coordination with Fire Chief Collina and his staff was required during the development of the project schedule as the Fire Department’s continued services pose the most complex component of construction phasing. The proposed project schedule offers a logical order of construction that takes into account relocation of firefighters and response times.

To minimize disruption and keep services intact during construction, the Committee recommends a three-phased approach, with the new Police Station and new Engine 2 in Phase 1, the renovation of and addition to Central Fire in Phase 2, and the new Engine 3 in Phase 3. Phase 1 would take 42 months from beginning to end while Phases 2 and 3 would take 36 months each. The phases would occur consecutively but in a staggered manner to allow one new/renovated fire station in full operation before the next fire station temporarily closes for construction. Assuming that the City is able to finalize a design contract soon after the election in November of this year, Phase 1 could conceivably break ground as early as the Spring of 2025. This timeline assumes that this renovation program is approved by ballot initiative in November 2023, and detailed design work commences immediately after, as illustrated in the project schedule below. **Any delay in initiating the design phase beyond December of 2023 will extend the project schedule and, consequently, will incur a higher total project cost due to cost escalation.**



For detailed information on the project schedule and conceptual layout of the proposed stations, please refer to the diagrams and space needs analysis in Attachment 2.

## Benefits & Disadvantages of a Phased Plan

### **Benefits of a Phased Plan:**

- Maintains uninterrupted public safety services and response times to the community by ensuring that two of our three fire stations are operational at any time, and that the current police station remains operational until the new police station is built and occupied.
- Minimizes the sunk costs of temporary quarters such as trailers to house staff and equipment during construction, which also result in inconvenient working conditions and reduced operational efficiency.

### **Disadvantages of a Phased Plan:**

- Construction costs in the later years are subject to costly escalation to account for more years of inflation.
- It will take longer for all public safety buildings to be renovated. This affects the Fire Department in particular as Fire Department personnel would need to wait longer until all three of their stations are rebuilt and back in operation.
- Costs for ongoing maintenance and repairs to the existing facilities will be necessary in the meantime (until the New Police Station and New Engine 2 open in 2027, Central Fire in 2029, and Engine 3 in 2030). Maintenance costs, which are covered by the City's operational budget nonetheless, are not included in the total project costs identified in this report.

## **Benefits Outweigh Disadvantages**

After reviewing all phasing information, the Committee finds that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages. The Committee foresees that the seven-year, phased approach would deliver public safety buildings that improve the Police and Fire Departments' ability to serve our community without negatively impacting their service to the community through this transition period. In a span of about 70 years, between 1895 and 1964, Melrose replaced its undersized and outdated stations, one by one, with our current stations. In 2023, our proposal attempts to replace/upgrade all four stations in a short span of seven years.

# Preliminary Cost Estimates & Underlying Assumptions

In direct coordination with our Committee, Dore+Whittier prepared high-level, pre-design costs for the proposed three-phased plan. All rough-order-of-magnitude cost estimates are based on the Construction Manager-at-Risk (CMR) project delivery method (M.G.L. Chapter 149A). Unlike the Design/Bid/Build project delivery method (M.G.L. Chapter 149), the CMR method enables the construction team to partner with the design firm and their client during the design phase and assist with schedule, budget, and value management. For this project in particular, a Construction Manager would be beneficial to this effort given the total project cost, the number of buildings, and the extensive construction phasing.

Starting with a construction cost of \$850 per square foot – an amount consistent with recent public safety projects in the Boston-metro area – a standard multiplier of 1.4 was applied to identify the total project cost that includes the following costs:

- Design fees for the design firm and the multiple consultants needed for a public safety project of this complexity (including but not limited to civil engineer, landscape architect, mechanical engineer, electrical engineer, plumbing engineer, fire protection engineer, structural engineer, environmental consultant, building code consultant, cost estimator, etc.).
- Construction manager fees, including pre-construction coordination during the design phase.
- Contingencies such as design and change order contingencies.
- Furniture, furnishings, and equipment.

In addition to identifying a total project cost of \$1,190 per square foot, Dore+Whittier escalated the cost of each project phase at five percent per annum to the year when construction of a specific station would start. For example, if the construction of all four stations was to start in 2023, the project would cost \$107.5M. However, the project must be broken into three distinct phases starting in 2025, 2027, and 2028, thus increasing the total project cost to \$129.7M based on projections for 2025-, 2027-, and 2028-dollar amounts. Please refer to the cost estimate in Attachment 2.

## 2023 Estimated Costs

*(Note: Cost estimates are based on the timeframe proposed in this report. Any delay will require updated projected costs.)*

### \$129.7M Total Project Cost:

- \$35.9M for new Police Station\*
- \$26.7M for renovated Central Fire
- \$32.3M for new Engine 2\*\*
- \$34.8M for new Engine 3

All costs are escalated to the year when construction is expected to start, according to the project schedule below.

*\* Includes a cost savings of \$4.2M from excluding the firing range, an important program space that was identified during the pre-design phase, from consideration at this moment for budgetary reasons.*

*\*\* Includes a total cost savings of \$4.6M: \$2.9M from excluding the maintenance bay and \$1.7M by eliminating temporary quarters for Fire Department personnel at Engine 2 from consideration at this moment for budgetary reasons.*

## Funding Mechanism: Debt Exclusion

Large capital projects, such as the proposed improvements to Melrose’s public safety buildings, are financed using a debt exclusion. A debt exclusion requires voter approval and allows the City to raise funds to pay for debt service costs for specific projects. The additional amount for the payment of debt service is added to the tax levy limit for the life of the debt only. Unlike Proposition 2 ½ (override) which is permanent and places strict limits on the amount of tax revenue a community can raise through property taxes, a debt exclusion is a temporary, but often long-term, tax levy.

The Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School (MVMMS) was funded through a debt exclusion approved by Melrose taxpayers. That debt service was issued in 2008 in the amount of \$28,017,187. The twenty-year term ends on November 1, 2028. The present cost to property owners is approximately \$200 per year based on a 2023 average single-family home value of \$733,465.

**Debt exclusion differs from an override in three main ways: purpose, duration, and levy limitations.**

	Debt Exclusion	Proposition 2 ½ Override
<b>Purpose</b>	Enables money to be raised for the sole purpose of capital projects	Enables money to be raised for any purpose
<b>Duration</b>	Temporarily increases a community’s tax levy <i>temporarily</i> , for the period of the related borrowing	Permanently increases community’s levy limit
<b>Limitations on Levy Increase</b>	No limit on tax levy/levy can exceed levy ceiling	Strict limits on tax levy, cannot exceed levy ceiling

Source: “Differences Between an Override and an Exclusion,” Massachusetts Division of Local Services: <https://youtu.be/qDSCatGyht8>.

## Anticipated Impact on Residential Taxpayers

The City’s financial team has analyzed the phasing plan and associated costs estimated for a four-building public safety project totalling approximately \$130,000,000 and determined that Melrose property owners should expect to pay approximately \$875 per year (\$73/month) in the early years of a 30 year term (2030–2054), based on the 2023 average single-family home value of \$733,465. This assessment is expected to decrease to \$220 per year for the average single-family home by the end of the term. These projected cost impacts are based on passage of a debt exclusion in November 2023, as well as the schedule for design and construction outlined in this report. The debt for the Middle School will drop off before the full impact of the debt for the public safety projects will be incurred.

The following table, which is also included as Attachment 4, provides an overview of estimated impacts based on level debt service.

ESTIMATED DEBT SERVICE TAX IMPACT SUMMARY  
7/18/2023

FY2023	RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL/ PERSONAL PROPERTY (CIP)
TAX RATE (per \$1,000)	\$10.42	\$18.1
LEVY %	91.59	2

	%		ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX DOLLAR IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY					\$800,000 ASSESSED VALUE
	8.41%		\$400,000 ASSESSED VALUE	\$500,000 ASSESSED VALUE	\$600,000 ASSESSED VALUE	\$700,000 ASSESSED VALUE		
	TAX RATES FOR DEBT SERVICE PER \$1,000 ASSESSED VALUE	TAX RATES FOR DEBT SERVICE PER \$1,000 ASSESSED VALUE						
	RESIDENTIAL	CIP						
\$35 MILLION	\$0.32	\$0.55	\$126.68	\$158.35	\$190.02	\$221.69	\$253.36	
\$50 MILLION	\$0.45	\$0.79	\$180.96	\$226.20	\$271.44	\$316.68	\$361.92	
\$75 MILLION	\$0.68	\$1.18	\$271.48	\$339.35	\$407.22	\$475.09	\$542.96	
\$100 MILLION	\$0.90	\$1.58	\$361.96	\$452.45	\$542.94	\$633.43	\$723.92	
\$125 MILLION	\$1.13	\$1.97	\$452.44	\$565.55	\$678.66	\$791.77	\$904.88	
\$130 MILLION	\$1.17	\$2.08	\$468.00	\$585.00	\$702.00	\$819.00	\$936.00	

**ASSUMPTIONS FOR TAX IMPACT ESTIMATES:**

These estimates are intended to help local officials analyze the impact on the local tax rate from hypothetical changes to the levy resulting from debt exclusions.

Rates are based on level debt service payments, 30-year term, 5% interest.

Dollar impacts represent annual increases to the tax bill above and beyond the annual Proposition 2½ percent increase.

Information provided is based on the most recent tax year's data (Fiscal Year 2023).

In succeeding years, the results will vary with changes in the City's total assessed value, tax rate, CIP shift, and debt service structure.

Attachment 3 provides a more detailed estimate of the impacts of a \$130 million, phased project on Melrose taxpayers over time. Attachment 3 was prepared by the city's bond counsel.

### **Absence of State Resources for Municipal Public Safety Building Projects**

Some municipal capital projects like school buildings or the library are able to take advantage of available state funding support that helps offset the cost of the project through related building authorities, including Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) or the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). Unfortunately, no such building authority or commission exists for public safety buildings. Although legislative proposals have been put forth to establish an authority to support municipal police and fire stations, no revolving fund or grant programs currently exist for public safety buildings. However, the \$130,000,000 cost included in this report is a projection based on preliminary design work completed by Dore + Whittier in Phase 1 of the PSBC's work. The total final project cost will ultimately be driven by the final project design. The design phase of this project will take about a year from the time that Melrose voters initially approve a debt exclusion. There will be many opportunities through the design phase to further refine the scope and fine tune project details to look for potential cost saving adjustments. It is possible for a municipality to reduce a debt exclusion authorization.

## Conclusion & Next Steps

It has been almost 60 years since the last public safety building was built in Melrose. With each passing decade, staffing, equipment, vehicles, and standards have changed to respond to increases in call volumes and the evolution of public safety. Yet, Melrose's police and fire stations have remained the same. The Police Station, Central Fire, Engine 2, and Engine 3, which have far exceeded their intended purpose and usable lives, are critically undersized to accommodate the community's current and future needs.

The conditions of Melrose's existing public safety buildings are the result of decades of underinvestment and deferred maintenance. This phenomenon is not unique to Melrose. Many surrounding communities have already or are similarly confronting the need for substantial public investment to bring public safety buildings into the modern era and to enable police and fire to serve the community in accordance with current standards and best practices. What is unique to Melrose, however, is that the state of disrepair on all four public safety buildings in Melrose necessitates that immediate action be taken concurrently.

Given their current state, time is of the essence. Buildings that were previously constructed over the course of seven decades, must be significantly renovated and rebuilt in the span of seven years. There are no longer any quick-fixes at the community's disposal for facilities that are outdated, undersized, unhygienic, non-code compliant, and incapable of supporting 21st Century police and fire programming or the high quality community services these departments strive to provide.

Our public safety buildings require a comprehensive, durable solution that meets current space needs while accommodating future department growth, equipment needs and larger apparatus, and the evolution of fire safety and policing for the next 50 years. The benefits and tradeoffs of meeting these needs must be balanced against deep consideration of costs and prospective impacts on Melrose taxpayers.

After 18 months of collaboration that included delving deeply into the details of the previous PSBC effort, thoroughly assessing department needs, developing cost projections based on preliminary design, and closely examining prospective tax impacts, this committee has reached consensus that upgrades and modernization of our existing facilities is imperative. The City of Melrose must significantly renovate and add to Central Fire, rebuild and expand Melrose Engines 2 and 3, and relocate and rebuild the Police Station. In some cases, the facilities could become dangerously unsafe without significant capital investment. Delayed action will only bring increased cost for future replacement, pose additional risks to the well-being of our police and fire personnel, leave residents vulnerable in emergency situations, and further undermine the departments' ability to meet community needs efficiently and effectively.

The PSBC is acutely aware that this will be a substantial undertaking for the community of which we are all a part, particularly because it is one of several necessary municipal investments on the horizon that will require public support and funding. However, it is clear from public input gathered through this phase of work that Melrose residents are broadly supportive of prioritizing and addressing these needs. The public is also keen to engage. As Melrose moves forward with next steps, the public is and will continue to be an important partner in solving for the city's current public safety building challenges and meeting needs with modern facilities that will grow with the community for decades to come.

This report concludes the work of the 2022–2023 Public Safety Building Committee. However, members of this committee will avail themselves to the city and stakeholders as the community moves towards a ballot initiative.

Massachusetts law requires that the municipal clerk must receive notice of a ballot question at least 35 days before the date of an election. The Melrose City Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

**The PSBC will present the findings of this report to the Appropriations Committee on Monday, July 24, 2023.**

# Attachments

## The Six Pillars of 21st Century Policing, and How it Impacts Police Station Design

By Chief Kevin Faller, Melrose Chief of Police (May 2023)

Trust between law enforcement agencies and the people they protect and serve is essential in a democracy. It is key to the stability of our communities, the integrity of our criminal justice system, and the safe and effective delivery of policing services. On December 18, 2014, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The President charged the task force with identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust. The Task Force on 21st Century Policing recommendations, each with action items, are organized around six main topic areas or “pillars.” A modern, 21st century Police Station is integral to achieving these principles, as described below:

### Pillar 1 — Building Trust and Legitimacy

- Engaging the community and having a dedicated “community room” and “training room” are important in having open conversations, especially with those of the marginalized community who often feel they do not have a voice or an avenue to interact and have conversations with the police. Our current station lacks these facilities.

### Pillar 2 — Policy and Oversight

- Community meetings and training classes in which the police department can listen to community input are necessary when building trust, creating fair and just policies, and maintaining oversight and increased transparency.

### Pillar 3 — Technology and Social Media

- The use of technology and social media will be greatly enhanced in a new facility. Officers will have the most modern tools to do their job and they will engage more effectively with the community.

### Pillar 4 — Community Policing and Crime Reduction

- A modern police station open and fully accessible to the public will increase positive interactions and foster a sense of trust and understanding, core concepts in community policing and crime reduction.

### Pillar 5 — Officer Training and Education

- A dedicated training room will increase the amount of training we can conduct on our own, ensure that our officers are consistently learning and maintaining their skills, and provide opportunities to collaborate with outside agencies.

### Pillar 6 — Officer Safety and Wellness

- A modern wellness center, breakroom, locker room, and roll call room are all lacking in our current facility. These spaces are important and needed to promote officer safety and wellness, both physically and mentally. They help foster professionalism, an increased sense of well-being, and positive morale within the police department. All of these benefits will aid in the recruitment and retention of qualified professional police officers, and improve the quality of services delivered to the community. The construction of a brand-new state of the art police station would be instrumental for the Melrose Police Department and the community to strive towards best practices in achieving the goals of the six pillars of 21st Century Policing.

The full Task Force Report can be accessed here:

[https://www.laed.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/pdfs/citations/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://www.laed.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/pdfs/citations/taskforce_finalreport.pdf)

**Melrose PSBC Final Report - July 2023**  
Attachments 2 & 3  
Attached Separately

The following documents are large files, attached separately:

- Attachment 2: Melrose PSBC Pre-Design Study by D+W (May 2023)
- Attachment 3: Melrose PSBC Projects Debt Model Draft (May 2023)

**Melrose PSBC Final Report - July 2023**  
Attachment 4

ESTIMATED DEBT SERVICE TAX IMPACT SUMMARY  
7/18/2023

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	8.41%		\$400,000	\$500,000	\$600,000	\$700,000	\$800,000
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	RESIDENTIAL	CIP					
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**ASSUMPTIONS FOR TAX IMPACT ESTIMATES:**

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