

**Town of North Haven**  
**16 Town Office Square**  
**P.O. Box 400**  
**North Haven, Maine 04853**  
**207.867.4433**

December 2022

Dear Community Members:

I am writing to provide information about our proposed Public Safety Building and to put that building in context with the other initiatives the Town is pursuing.

Public Safety Building

Our current Fire Station was initially constructed in 1934. The Town has added onto it and reconfigured it over the years to house our fire trucks, ambulance, and snowplows. While the building has served us well over the years, our equipment has outgrown it. Consequently, the community voted last year to pursue a new building rather than trying to once again repair and reconfigure the existing building.

The Select Board, Fire Chief, EMS Chiefs, and Road Commissioner have worked closely with Ricci Construction and Gartley & Dorsky on the building's design to ensure two things: (1) a building that will meet the community's needs well into the future; and (2) a building that our community can pay for without delaying or giving up on the Priorities we have arrived at and maintenance issues we must address. We are still awaiting an exact figure, but the guaranteed maximum price will be very close to \$5 million. This is more than what we discussed in 2019-21, but substantially less than it would have been if everyone involved – including Ricci Construction - had not rolled up their sleeves and worked hard to bring the price down without sacrificing function.

We would locate the building on the Town's Crabtree Farm property about 80 feet off South Shore Road.

In addition to housing our trucks and ambulance, the building would provide meeting and storage space, and serve as a community evacuation shelter. With lessons learned from the pandemic and two recent structure fires, we have included showers for EMTs and firefighters, a commercial washer and dryer capable of handling protective clothing, and a compressor to fill SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) tanks.

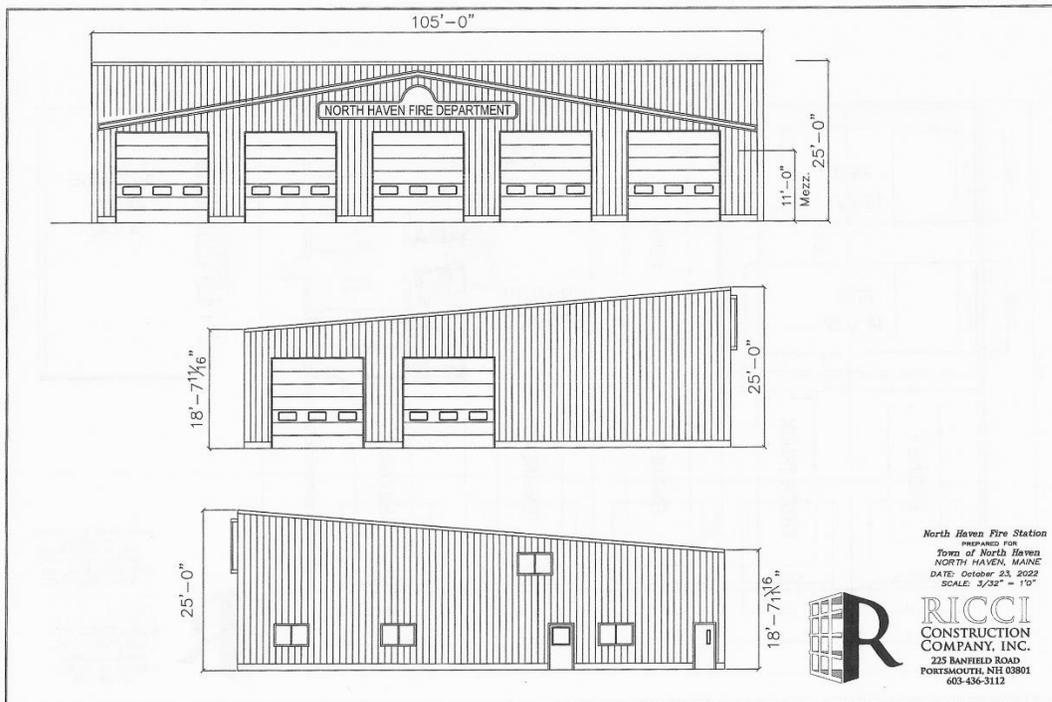
The new Public Safety Building would be well insulated all around. The meeting spaces will be fitted with heat pumps, while the truck bays will have forced hot air to rapidly bring them up to a temperature above freezing after opening all garage doors. We will ensure the building is ready to connect to a solar panel array.

In a special town meeting, we will ask voters to decide whether to pay for this new building by taking out a bond, payable over a 20-year period. We have searched for grants and other sources of funding but have not been successful.

Here is the layout of the proposed Public Safety Building.



And here is what the building would look like on the outside.



## Vision and Priorities

Last year we worked together as a community to develop a Vision and arrive at three Priorities.

### **Vision**

North Haven is a remarkable island community – resourceful, caring, safe, and inclusive - committed to sustaining a thriving year-round economy, stewarding our natural resources, and preserving scenic beauty for current and future generations.

### **Priorities**

1. Access to Housing
2. Workforce Development & Economic Diversification
3. Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change Impacts

As we said throughout the process, our immediate goal is to develop and execute concrete recommendations within concrete timelines.

Here are some of the actions we have taken to date.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Funding Sources</b>
1	Formed a housing working group to identify community housing needs and make recommendations that address access to housing.	2022-23	Town funds (minimal)
1	Housing Explorations: The Select Board has approved seeking grants to fund infrastructure for houses on the Town's Crabtree Farm property. Use of the Town's property would require <b>voter approval</b> .	2022-24	State Community Solutions Grant. The Town's contribution would be the land itself.
2	Hired Camoin Associates to evaluate our economy and workforce and to make recommendations for change	2022	Town funds
3	Water Studies	2022-23	Maine Capacity Development Grant: 75% State funds/25% town funds

And here are the recommendations and timelines *under consideration*. We are continuing to refine them and will present them to the Select Board and then to the community as a whole before moving forward.

Priority	Action	Timeline	Funding Sources
1	Old Fire Station - Apartments	2024	Town funds/grants/private
2, 3	Waterfront Access: Village & Pulpit Hbr.	2023-27	Town funds/grants/private
1, 2, 3	Zoning changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Use Ordinance: Reduce minimum lot sizes and setback requirements</li> <li>• Shoreland Zone Ordinance: Reduce minimum lot sizes, allow for “commercial fisheries” and “maritime activities,” and create a Special Local Condition in the Village that will match State minimum lot sizes to our proposed local Village District minimums, 8,000 square feet.</li> </ul>	2022	Town funds (nominal cost)
3	Sea Level Rise/Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Measures	2023-27	Town funds/grants/private
3	Heat Pumps – Town Office	2023	Town funds/Efficiency Maine rebates
3	Community Building Upgrades	2023-24	Town funds/Efficiency Maine rebates/grants

### Cell Tower

You may have read that we are working to have a cell tower erected on the island. Tilson Infrastructure initiated the project and will develop the tower at its expense. The tower will be located near the proposed Public Safety Building on the Town’s Crabtree Farm property. This project will not cost the Town any money. Instead, Tilson will pay \$800 per month in rent to the Town for use of the land. We recently held a public hearing, and plan to present an amended cell tower ordinance to the Town’s voters in a special town meeting in December. The amended ordinance would increase the maximum tower height from 75 feet to 125 feet, which is necessary to make the cell tower antennas effective.

### Maintenance

- Water – We are currently working with engineering firms to replace the filter media (sand) in the filters at the Water Treatment Plant. This may require us to cut holes in the roof to remove and replace the sand. Following this work, we will look to replace the roof shingles and possibly add a solar array to the building. We are also going to replace the current ozone generators with new models. Adding ozone to the pond water is the first step in the treatment process. We will seek grants for all this work.

- Sewer – We are working with an engineering firm to add a coagulant to the sewage influent, which will help separate the solid from the liquid waste making our treatment of the liquid waste more effective. We already have funding for this project.
- Roads, ditches, culverts – We will continue to put money aside in our Road Repaving Reserve and to seek State funds for culvert work as needed. The Climate Working Group under Priority 3 is interested in finding funds to make our culverts more effective at allowing fish to migrate into fresh water to spawn.
- Buildings – We will continue to put money into our building reserve accounts, making repairs as needed (such as re-shingling the Town Office roof and the Recycling Building roof at the Transfer Station) and upgrading systems when appropriate (such as heat pumps in the Town Office).
- Ferry parking lot – Maine DOT is working on a contract to repair and replace the railings and concrete curbs in the parking lot at the State’s expense. This work is scheduled for 2023.

Funding & Effects on Taxes

As I noted above, we have not been able to find grants for fire station construction. We may be successful in obtaining grants for items like a generator and computer and telephone equipment, but nothing that would come close to paying for the building as a whole. In contrast, we know there is grant money available for housing, waterfront access, sea level rise mitigation, and climate change adaptation. We also know there are funds available to support rural water systems, ditches, and culverts.

With this in mind, the following table shows the average annual payments we would make on a bond to build the new Public Safety Building. I have also included a \$10 million bond for comparison.

<b>Loan Amount</b>	<b>Term (years)</b>	<b>Average Annual Payment</b>	<b>Percent of Current Town Budget</b>	<b>Percent of Current Total Budget (Town + School)</b>	<b>Total Payments</b>
\$5 million	20	\$374,499	16.0%	8.0%	\$7,864,349
\$10 million		\$748,998	32.0%	16.1%	\$15,728,698
\$5 million	15	\$443,856	19.0%	9.5%	\$7,101,695
\$10 million		\$887,712	38.0%	19.0%	\$14,203,390

The Select Board and I strongly recommend a 20-year payment term. If we borrow the approximately \$5 million needed to construct the new building over twenty years, you can see the approximate effect on your taxes in the following table. I have also included the approximate effects of additional borrowing for other projects.

<b>Current Annual Tax Payment</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$7,500,000</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
\$1,000	\$1,080	\$1,120	\$1,160
\$2,000	\$2,160	\$2,240	\$2,320
\$5,000	\$5,400	\$5,600	\$5,800
\$10,000	\$10,800	\$11,200	\$11,600

My goals in writing this letter are to give you the context to ask questions, to discuss the building and other initiatives with your friends, and to encourage you to vote. The Select Board and I would really like to see a large turnout, large enough to be sure how the community feels about the Public Safety Building and how that project fits in with the other initiatives we are pursuing.

I am going to ask the Select Board to set the special town meeting for Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m., at the Community Building. We will have a warrant article with the exact guaranteed maximum price ready for your consideration. Please come.

If you have any questions, please call me at the Town Office, 867.4433, or send me an email, [administrator@northhavenmaine.org](mailto:administrator@northhavenmaine.org). Thank you for taking the time to read through this.



Rick Lattimer  
Town Administrator