SCHOOL FACILITIES TASK FORCE
2020 RIVERHAWK VISION
PRESENTATION TO NORTH WASCO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 21
THE DALLES, OREGON

December 2, 2015
Task Force Charter

- **Scope and Objectives:**
  - Review condition of existing school facilities to determine whether the facilities are adequate to meet the needs of students and staff.
  - Develop conceptual plans that address deficiencies in the facilities.
  - Consider financing mechanisms available to implement the plans.
  - Based on the School Board’s action, the Task Force members may assist the board in publicly promoting a plan and financing in support of the school administration’s efforts to implement the plan.

- **Task Force Composition:** members of the community that are willing to pursue these objectives.
Review condition of existing school facilities:

- Existing facilities have substantial deficiencies – many that were identified in School Board’s long-range planning efforts between 2005 and 2012. “Conditions range from good to poor”
- These deficiencies result in undesirable burdens on staff:
  - Overcrowding in classrooms
  - Unreliable and inefficient climate control in most buildings
  - Excessive maintenance and utility costs
  - Regulatory compliance issues (ADA, asbestos, security and access control)
Task Force Findings

- Condition of existing school facilities (cont’d):
  - These deficiencies contribute to learning difficulties for students:
    - Overcrowding in classrooms – not enough classrooms for the student population
    - Poor temperature control – classrooms are too cold or too hot.
    - Food service facilities that are inadequate for the student population. Lunch starts at 10:30 and ends at 1:00 or later
    - Insufficient parking for high school students.
    - Poor access for disabled students.
    - Inadequate restroom facilities for all students.
  - Some deficiencies may be associated with fire and safety risks.
Task Force Findings

- **Overcrowding:**
  - Elementary Schools – Currently house over 1400 students. Capacity is less than 1000.
  - Middle School – Currently houses 620 students, was built for 600
  - High School – Currently houses 820 students, 850 capacity. Need capacity for approximately 1000 in 10 years. Student attrition due to overcrowding may have occurred.

- **Operation, Maintenance and Repair of Older Buildings**
  - Poor Energy Use Index (EUI) = high utility bills
  - Older buildings are particularly inefficient: Col Wright, TDHS, Chenoweth Elementary
  - Presence of asbestos complicates repairs and improvements
  - Many facilities and components have far exceeded the typical useful service life
    - Failing boilers, plumbing, lighting, flooring, and structural components.
  - Many facilities need retrofits for access, security and seismic requirements
Pursue replacement of High School and Chenoweth Elementary with new facilities.

- Construct new High School on 50 acre property west of River Road, between Highway 30 and Interstate 84.
- Construct new Elementary School at current location of vacant Chenoweth Middle School.
- After relocation of students to new facilities, including Wahtonka Community School, transfer 30 acre Wahtonka campus to NWC Parks & Rec for sports & rec.
- Initial round of bond financing including $multi-million match from Oregon SB 447 funds

Potential Obstacles

- Gorge Commission determination needed to change land use designation.
- State Scenic Highway changes: widen with calming at school approaches.
- Check wetland designations in the 50 acre site
Chenoweth Creek Nature Preserve - 10 acres
Concept A: Phase 2

- Construct new elementary schools at 14th Street Reservoir site and Columbia View Heights (10 acres).

- Sell or repurpose properties that are no longer needed for school district purposes
  - The Dalles High School could be used to host an Early Learning and Family Wellness Center, including early learning classrooms, social services for families with young children and a collaboration with Parks and Rec to maximize use of the tennis courts, gym facilities and green spaces.
  - After relocation of students to the two new elementary schools, sell Dry Hollow Elementary property for residential development.
  - Reserve Thompson Track for a future elementary school.
  - Sell remaining 90 acres at Columbia View Heights.
  - Use sale proceeds and second round of bond finance including additional match from Oregon SB 447 funds

- Consider retaining properties that may have future value to the district as educational facilities
  - Colonel Wright Elementary retained and refurbished for preschool program.
  - Offer to relocate Quinton Street ballfield activities to new NWC Parks site at 30 acre Wahtonka campus and sell Quinton to baseball franchises or retain for future community elementary or preschool.
Concept B: Wahtonka Site

- New High School at Wahtonka Campus/Chenoweth Elementary site
- New Elementary at Chenoweth Middle School site

**Pros:**
- No new land required

**Cons:**
- 30 acre property is smaller than probable high school needs
- Precludes county and parks interest in sports and recreation center at Wahtonka site.
Concept C: Hilltop Site
Hilltop Site

- Either build into the hillside south of the parking lot or on top on the hill.
- Pursue sharing parking and practice fields with CGCC and Parks and Recreation.

Pros:
- Educational collaboration with CGCC
- Central location
- Spectacular setting

Cons:
- Requires excavation and leveling
- Limited access
- Smaller space (24 acres)
Concept D: Early Learning Center

- Consolidate all 10 kindergarten classes at either Wahtonka High School or TDWHS buildings.
- May include Pre-K and 1st grade.
- Will reduce overcrowding at all elementary schools.
Concept E: Family Wellness Center

• Co-locate child and family services with the Early Learning Center.

• Services could include: WIC, Head Start, Home Visiting, Housing Services, and a health clinic.

• Co-location increases accessibility to services and children’s educational readiness.
Concept F: Status Quo

- Review and enumerate detailed remediation plan for all existing buildings, as was done in 2008, and finance repairs, refurbishments and improvements.
  - Estimated cost was $76 M in 2008.
- Does not address parking and overcrowding at The Dalles High School.
- Continued use of portables to prevent overcrowding at elementary schools, middle school and high school.
## High School Concept Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Concept A: New Building at Highway 30 Site</th>
<th>Concept B: New Building on Wahtonka Campus</th>
<th>Concept C: New Building at Hilltop Site, south of CGCC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Provisions | - generous space @ 50 acres
- level ground
- impressive welcome to town | - adequate space @ 30 acres
- level ground
- district owns property
- good street access | - synergy with CGCC
- central location
- sufficient space @ 25 acres
- spectacular setting |
| Disadvantages | - potential US 30 access constraint
- requires Gorge Commission approval
- extreme edge of town
- Regional General Wetlands Study | - requires demolition of WHS
- requires moving current occupants to new location | - requires excavating and leveling terrain
- access is limited |
| Community Impact | - improves civic image
- allows development of other properties | - close to transit hub
- adds value to Chenoweth area | - improves civic image
- promotes college prep
- allows development of other properties |
| Comparable Costs | - land purchase required
- utility infrastructure under freeway or across Chenoweth Creek | - demolition of asbestos laden building(s) | - potential donated land
- terrain leveling
- access road construction
- utility infrastructure |
## Comparison of High School Choices on Elementary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary Concept</th>
<th>Elementary Concept A if Highway 30 Site is selected</th>
<th>Elementary Concept B if Wahtonka Campus is selected</th>
<th>Elementary Concept C if Hilltop Site is selected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Elementary School concept** | - Demolish CEM and rebuild elementary at CMS  
- Execute necessary repairs and improvements on other elementary schools | - Locate new high school and CEM on Wahtonka Campus  
- Execute necessary repairs and improvements on all elementary schools | - Execute necessary repairs and improvements on all elementary schools |
| **Benefits** | - district owns CMS property  
- New elementary and high school in Chenoweth area  
- entire Wahtonka campus available for other use | - district owns property  
- extends life of current elementary schools | - extends life of current elementary schools  
- portion of Wahtonka campus is available for other uses. |
| **Disadvantages** | - does not reduce overall elementary overcrowding | - does not reduce overall elementary overcrowding  
- Wahtonka campus will not be available for other uses  
- limited athletic field space | - does not reduce overall elementary overcrowding |
| **Community Impact** | - adds value to Chenoweth area | - retains current community schools | - retains current community schools |
| **Comparable Costs** | - demolition of two asbestos laden buildings | - renovation might not require asbestos removal | - renovation might not require asbestos removal |
# Early Learning Center Location Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Concept D: Early Learning Center at Wahtonka High School</th>
<th>Concept E: Early Learning Center at The Dalles High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Provisions** | - Reduces overcrowding at all elementary schools  
- Repurposes WHS building  
- Desirable location  
- Synergy with Community School | - Reduces overcrowding at all elementary schools  
- Repurposes TDWHS building  
- Central location  
- Synergy with Community School |
| **Disadvantages** | - Requires moderate renovation of building  
- Non-central location | - Requires extensive renovation of building  
- Alter traffic flow for internal parking |
| **Community Impact** | - Synergy with community services  
- Adds value to Chenoweth area | - Synergy with community services |
| **Comparable Costs** | - might not require asbestos removal  
- may include seismic upgrade  
- single story facility | - more extensive renovation required  
- could include elevator |
Next Steps:

- Continue to refine details of each concept.
- Estimate cost of each concept.
- Develop financing strategy for each concept.
- Board adopts concept that best meets the needs of district staff and students.
- School district pursues implementation, including bond measure on ballot and SB 447 application.
- If requested Task Force members may assist board to publicly promote plan through election(s).
Addendum 1. - Other Uses for District Properties

Schools, like parks and ballfields, are greenspaces that improve the quality of life and value of the surrounding community. If a school campus is vacated as a result of building a new school, it could benefit the city for entities such as Northern Wasco Parks and Recreation to acquire and develop the parcel as athletic fields or a park. The School Facilities Task Force includes members representing Parks and Recreation, The City of The Dalles, and CGCC. Each of these representatives have indicated that their entity would be interested in discussing their land needs with District 21.
Addendum 2. Timing of bond election and bond effect on property taxes.

- The Oregon State Legislature passed SB 447 that provides multi-million dollar match for a construction bond that is passed by the voters. In order to take advantage of this state funding, we recommend placing a bond on the November 2016 general election ballot.

- There are several bonds currently in the property tax rate that will soon be retired. The NORCOR and fire station bonds retire in 2016 and 2017 respectively. The much larger Middle School bond retires in June of 2020. It is possible to structure a bond such that the tax burden is “feathered in” meaning that the tax load begins small and steps up later. As a result, it would be possible to structure a bond such that the new bond phases in as old bonds retire in roughly equal steps.
Addendum 3. Elementary and Middle Schools

- Considering short term needs, the School District identified necessary repairs and improvements for facilities in 2008. The most critical of the repairs could be included in the new building bond or drawn from the SB 447 funds.

- In the long term, a fourth elementary school will be necessary to serve our growing population. A fourth elementary school could also allow all the elementary schools to incorporate sixth grade classes and thereby alleviate the overcrowding at the Middle School.

- The School Facilities Task Force encourages the continuation of community grade schools but notes that some schools could move to new locations. Colonel Wright could move to the 14th Street Reservoir site. Dry Hollow could move to Thompson Street Track, Quinton St. Ballpark, or a nearby orchard.

- The Columbia View Heights property is a very attractive site for a fourth elementary school. This location would create the optimal distribution of elementary schools across the city and increase the value of the balance of the property owned by the School District. At present, there may be insufficient families in the vicinity to justify an elementary school.