

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	October 4, 2021
Action Required:	Adopt Resolution
Presenter:	Lisa Larson-Torres, Board Chair, Charlottesville City School Board Wyck Knox, Project Architect, VMDO Architects
Staff Contacts:	Chip Boyles, City Manager Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr., School Superintendent, Charlottesville City Schools
Title:	School Reconfiguration Concept Design - \$75 Million

Background: Following over thirteen years of community discussion, the Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) School Board reaffirms the need to reconfigure the present allocation of grades in the elementary and middle schools to further academic and equity goals. Currently, students in CCS transition from six neighborhood elementary schools to Walker Upper Elementary for grades five and six, and transition again to Buford Middle School for grades seven and eight before transitioning to Charlottesville High School for grade nine through twelve. Pre-K is available to a limited number of income-eligible students within the neighborhood elementary schools. The School Board proposes a renovation and addition to Buford Middle school, allowing it to serve a planned capacity of 1,050 students in grades six through eight. Pre-K will be centralized into one location at the Walker site, and fifth grade will move to the existing elementary schools.

Discussion: A plan to explore various design concepts with the citizens of Charlottesville was reviewed with the School Board at the May 21, 2021 School Board retreat, and again at a joint work session of the School Board and Charlottesville City Council on May 26, 2021. Potential scopes of work were developed and discussed over seven public meetings with the Community Design Team (CDT) and informed by numerous outreach and engagement efforts. The CDT's conceptual design recommendations were presented to a joint work session of the School Board and City Council on September 15, 2021.

Based on the results of the process noted above, the following is being recommended for approval:

- Grade level reconfiguration achieved by August of 2026
- A combination of demolition, construction, and heavy renovation at Buford resulting in approximately 187,000 square feet and based on the "Build in the Bowl" option
- Pre-K temporarily occupying 'Building A' of Walker in 2026
- New furniture to accommodate fifth grade students at the elementary schools
- A plan for a new Early Childhood Center to be built on the southern end of the Walker Campus that would be executed as soon as funding is available.

Community Engagement: The Community Design Team (CDT) held seven public meetings and engaged in numerous outreach and engagement efforts to gather input on potential development options.

Alignment with City Council Vision and Priority Areas: This project aligns with Goal 1 – An Inclusive Community of Self-sufficient Residents of the City’s Strategic Plan by meeting objective 1.1 to prepare students for academic and vocational success.

Budgetary Impact: Currently, the City’s 5 year CIP plan includes a \$50 million place holder in FY25 for the reconfiguration project. This resolution recommends approval to increase the budget placeholder from \$50 million to \$75 million with an anticipated construction start date of July 1, 2023. (Council should note that, if the anticipated construction start date is between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, all of the necessary costs will need to be anticipated within the budget process for FY2024, based on final design and construction plans, and that budget process will commence in the Fall of 2022). Because this resolution only seeks Council approval to move forward with a design concept, there is no immediate budget impact—this is not an appropriation of public funding. Council will consider final approval of the project and the funding at a later date either through the annual budget appropriation process or by a separate resolution to appropriate the funds.

Attachments:
VMDO Presentation

RESOLUTION
TO EXPRESS APPROVAL FOR THE CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOL
BOARD TO PROCEED WITH A DESIGN CONCEPT PROCESS FOR A
SCHOOL RECONFIGURATION PROJECT
(Projected Cost: \$75,000,000)

BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Charlottesville's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) currently includes a funding placeholder in FY 2025 in the amount of only \$50 million for a School Reconfiguration project, to include the following schools: Walker Upper Elementary and Buford Middle School;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that through a public engagement and evaluation of several design options, design option 3.1 has been selected as the option that best meets the objectives of the project and is estimated to cost \$75 million dollars;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Charlottesville City School Board is hereby authorized to proceed with obtaining conceptual design plans for a school configuration project, with the design to contemplate a projected cost of not more than \$75 million (inclusive of design, engineering, and construction costs, and standard contingencies). While the City awaits the results of the conceptual design process, the City's CIP shall be updated for FY 2023 to reflect the \$75 million projected cost.