

South Shore Vocational Technical School New Building Project – FAQ Document

Where can I find more specific information about the building project components?

The building project information is available at <https://southshorettechproject.com/> or you can email info@southshorettechproject.com.

What is the total project cost for the project?

The total project cost is \$276 million. The project qualifies for MSBA reimbursement. After MSBA reimbursement, the total project cost is approximately \$165 million.

What is Rockland's portion of the debt share for the project?

Each town's share of the project debt is proportional the town's enrollment numbers. Currently 21% of all SSVT enrollment are Rockland residents (approximately 140 students). Rockland's financial share of this proposed project is currently estimated to be up to \$35 million, net of anticipated state aid, but it could be a little lower depending on future enrollment shifts.

The new Regional School Agreement that Town Meeting recently approved in November will now update each town's share of the debt based on a 3-year rolling average of actual enrollment. So, our share of the debt will not be fixed at one point in time permanently. It will update based on our changing share of total enrollment going forward.

What do voters need to know about the regional election process?

It's very important that Rockland voters understand that this is a REGIONAL ballot to approve the project, which means that even if a majority of Rockland voters vote against it, it could still pass if a majority of the ENTIRE SOUTH SHORE TECH DISTRICT votes to support it.

Voters should know that regional school building projects fall under different state laws compared to regular town projects. The biggest difference is that a Town Meeting vote is NOT required. The ONLY way for voters to give their input is to vote at the ballot elections. There will be no Town Meeting discussion or votes for this project.

What towns are in the regional district?

Abington, Cohasset, Hanover, Hanson, Norwell, Scituate, Whitman, Rockland and Marshfield.

What is the regional election date?

January 25, 2025. Polling hours will be from 9 – 5pm at your regular polling station (Middle School/High School or Esten School). To determine your regular polling station please visit the Secretary of State's website and enter you address at:

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/WhereDoIVoteMA/WhereDoIVote>.

Additionally in Rockland, the Rockland Select Board voted to hold a special election on 1/25/25 at the same date/time/place as the South Shore Regional Vocational Technical School special election. The sole question that will be on the ballot is a Prop. 2½ debt exclusion question to fund the SSRVTS school project that will be voted in their regional election.

What will the voting process look like for the regional ballot and local election on January 25, 2025?

For clarification about what voters can expect on the day of the regional and local election on January 25, 2025, please see below step-by-step instructions.

- Voter checks in with election official **ONCE**
- Election official provides **BOTH** regional ballot and local election ballot at the same time
- Voter takes **BOTH** ballots to voting booth
- Voter submits **BOTH** completed ballots in tabulation machine at the precinct.

Registered voters should report to their regular precinct. Don't know your precinct? Find out on the Secretary of State's website: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/WhereDoIVoteMA/WhereDoIVote>.

What is the earliest that residents could expect to see an impact on their taxes should the building project and debt exclusion pass? When will the full debt exclusion increase start?

The bonds won't be issued for a few years during construction, so interest rates could change up or down. According to current projections from South Shore VoTech, the full debt exclusion increase would likely start in FY29.

How will Rockland pay for its share of the PROJECT debt?

If the project passes at the Regional Ballot, and the project moves forward, it's critical that Rockland has the ability to pay for our share of the debt. On November 5, 2024, the Rockland Select Board voted to hold a special election on 1/25/25 at the same date/time/place as the South Shore Regional Vocational Technical School special election. The sole question that will be on the ballot is a Prop. 2½ debt exclusion question to fund the SSRVTS school project that will be voted in their regional election.

If the project passes, but Rockland voters do NOT approve a tax increase to pay for it, then we will be looking at significant budget cuts across every sector of our town operations, which will severely harm all of our public services for years to come.

What is a Prop 2 ½ Debt Exclusion?

Additional information about Prop 2 1/2 is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWDTtSs7wOIIM3_6oschrXyP8ClyFoKv8

What is the impact on my tax bill if this project passes and the debt exclusion passes?

For the average value single family home (\$517,355), the range for the tax increase will be \$250 - \$300 annually. That means that the average annual property tax bill will increase by \$250 - \$300 for the life of the debt, and once the bonds are paid off in 30 years, then that tax increase will disappear. For homes valued greater than \$517,000 the impact will be more; and for homes valued less, the tax increase will be less.

What is the annual debt burden to the town if the Prop 2 ½ ballot question does not pass?

The specifics of the bonding, rates and terms are not finalized however, based on current projected costs the approximate annual debt burden would be about \$2 million annually for 30 years at a level debt service with an interest rate of 4%.

How do you determine the average single family home value?

The single family home value is calculated based on the Town of Rockland Assessed Value, not current market conditions (like Zillow).

Is a Town Meeting Vote required for the regional school building project to pass?

No. Town meeting vote is not required for the project to pass. Passing at the regional election is the only requirement for the project to move forward.