

## V PROGRAM

### Program Narrative

The following program was developed with input from the Senior Center Needs Committee and the Permanent Town Building Committee, and within the constraints of the existing site and building. An important part of the process included comparing the existing building's program with a preliminary program provided by the Committee (see Appendix G). This allowed the designers to more clearly understand the goals of the Town of Westford.

The program spaces are grouped into the following major components:

#### Entrance / Lobbies

The building requires a lobby that orients and directs visitors. It needs to be large enough to accommodate large numbers of individuals arriving and leaving events in the multipurpose room. An information reception desk should be located in this area.

An open grand stair, located near the lobby, should visually connect the two levels of the building.

Casual breakout spaces should be located throughout the center for informal small gatherings. A small lounge on the second floor would be beneficial.

#### Senior Center Program Areas

The program areas provide space for the social activities of the Senior Center and include:

- *Multipurpose Room*: provides space for activities including daily meals, special functions, meetings, performances, and recreation/ exercise classes. A 2,300 square foot room is provided which can accommodate 230 individuals for lecture seating and between 130 and 153 indi-

viduals for banquet seating. (A meal event should not, if possible, be split into multiple seatings.) An operable partition will divide the room into two spaces for flexibility to allow meals to be set up while, for example, an exercise class is conducted on the other side. A room of this size, or larger, is typical of most new senior center projects in Massachusetts.

- *Lounge/Library*: provides a welcoming and comfortable place for activities including reading, visiting with friends, playing cards and other games/puzzles. Space will also be available for books, game storage, display of pamphlets and other announcements. This space may also have a gas fireplace with surrounding cabinetry.
- *Arts & Crafts Room*: provides space for clean and dirty arts activities; ideally it should have access to an outdoor terrace. Storage required.
- *Game Room*: provides space for two billiards tables, games tables, and similar recreational activities.
- *Computer Room*: provides space for computer users, in lab and/or class settings.
- *Fitness Room*: provides space for exercise equipment and mats for individual exercise.
- *Exercise Equipment Room*: provides large room (+/-1000 square feet) for weights, machines, and aerobic equipment.
- *General Classrooms*: provides space for classes and meetings. There may be need for more than one general classroom, depending upon program offerings.
- *Conference / Card Room*: provides a conference room that can also be used for small classes and card games. Requires individual square tables that can be placed together to form a large con-

ference table setup, rather than a single executive style conference table.

- *Thrift Shop*: provides space for sale of gift and consignment items.
- *Woodworking Shop*: provides space for woodworking activities, including the use of selected power tools and materials storage.
- *Model Train Set-Up*: provides dedicated space to elaborate model train tracks and terrain.

#### Senior Center Administration

The staff area should contain a reception desk for greeting and assisting guests. Other functions that should be accommodated are the transportation office area, office manager, facility volunteers and general work space. Opportunity for private and semi-private offices should be provided. The director and assistant director should have separate offices with a visual connection to the reception and lobby areas.

A separate office should be provided for the veteran's agent and should have a small table for four to meet with families, and a storage area.

A copy room/area with storage should also be provided.

#### Social Services

- *Social Worker*: provides office for social worker
- *Outreach Coordinator*: provides workspace for the outreach coordinator and volunteer
- *Family Meeting Space*: provides space for a group up to 8 for counseling sessions. This space might be shared with staff break room and contain a kitchenette.
- *Health Room*: provides space for health screenings and counseling. Include a hand wash sink with cabinetry.

#### Food Service

A commercial kitchen is required to meet Board of Health requirements for serving food to the public (standards for heating foods to certain temperatures in a certain time, sanitary standards, etc.). This kitchen must be able to accommodate reheated or cooked-from-scratch meals for on-site congregate meals and for outreach meals. The trend is for on-site cooked-from-scratch meals as they are much more appealing and thus encourage more participation.

Currently, approximately 65 lunches are provided daily -- 30 Meals-On-Wheels, 15 Adult Supportive Day and 20 served on-site. The need will increase when the new, larger center is complete.

In addition to the main kitchen area, receiving, food pantry, and clerical space should be included in the food service area.

The pantry/receiving area should have direct access to the exterior for food and/or other deliveries, Meals on Wheels deliveries, and dumpster access.

#### Toilet Facilities

In addition to one set of rest rooms, one "companion" unisex toilet should be provided on each floor. The companion toilet is recommended for two reasons: 1) it should be located somewhat remote from main the set of toilets to reduce the distance from program space to a toilet; 2) it allows an elder to be assisted by a spouse or caregiver while maintaining privacy and dignity ("companion toilet"). The existing building has 2 unisex accessible toilet rooms.

#### Support

*Laundry* – space for a washer and dryer has been requested.

*Maintenance area* – work area and storage for the building facilities should be provided.

*Recycling Area* – provide dedicated space for recycling paper, cardboard, glass, metal, etc.... This area should be convenient for use and pick-up.

*Mechanical space* for the domestic hot water boiler and any electrical equipment will be needed. Depending upon the final design, the existing heating equipment might be retained and expanded, relocated in the basement, or abandoned. At a minimum a new ventilation and air conditioning system would be needed. Equipment for a new HVAC system would be located in the attic area and condensers would be located on pads outside of the building at grade or on a roof area..

*Multipurpose room storage* is necessary to accommodate tables, chairs and audio visual equipment when they are not in use.

*Coat storage* should be provided throughout the senior center, with a large proportion being provided near or within the multi-purpose room. Coat storage is best provided without doors in “thick walls” along corridors or within classrooms rather than in coatrooms where bottlenecks occur after large events.

*Medical Equipment Storage dedicated to items such as wheel chairs, walkers, and other equipment related to elder care should be provided. Direct access to the service parking area is desirable.*

*Additional storage* besides the multi-purpose room, arts and crafts storage areas, and medical equipment should be provided throughout the building, with one large general storage room located in the basement.

*Electrical and janitor’s closets* with adequate work space (room for a small work bench) are to be provided.

#### *Exterior Storage*

A storage room capable of accommodating a snow blower, shovels, rakes, sand/salt and other site maintenance items should be provided, preferably near the main entry.

#### *Outdoor Furniture Storage*

A storage room for storing outdoor furniture during the winter months should be provided, preferably adjacent to terrace and porch areas.

#### Adult Day Program

Currently the unlicensed supportive adult day program is located off-site. It can serve up to 18 clients per day. There will be a need for expansion of services with state licensing in the future.

Intended to serve 50 clients, the facility should provide 50 square feet per client\* for activity spaces (2,500 square feet) exclusive of support areas storage, administrative areas (3 offices and small conference room), nurses area, and toilet rooms. The program may need to contain separate activity areas to accommodate varying degrees of disability, including a demential day program.

*(Note: should it require more than three minutes to evacuate all clients and staff, the occupancy designation is required to be Institutional (I-2) for purposes of the building code and as such is much more restrictive than a Business or Educational designation. An I-2 use is not permitted in a Type 5B (wood frame) building, which is the construction type of the existing Cameron Senior Center.)*

*\*See 130 CMR 404.412 Adult Day Health Program Physical Plan Requirements for details of licensing requirements.*

It is important that the Adult Supportive Day Program portion of the senior center complex be physically connected to the building to support a goal of the center in involving the younger seniors assisting the older, more infirm seniors. However, the social day care should be somewhat removed – and will require its own entrance - from the main activities of the center for several reasons. The supportive day program requires constant staff involvement for patrons with increased levels of dementia and physical infirmities. A controlled outdoor space must be provided. Severely impaired individuals in the main activity areas on regular basis often cause younger seniors to feel uncomfortable. It is very important that the senior center is accessible for the most frail seniors but managed in manner that does not cause younger seniors to stay away.

The size of this program element, its recommended connection to the main senior center activities, and its potential I-2 classification will pose a challenge in the development of this site.

### Exterior Spaces

#### *Front door*

An identifiable front door and main entrance with an accessible drive-up / drop-off area is an important element in a successful Senior Center.

Ideally, the level at the front door is the same as the main floor level of the building. Any change in level presents a barrier to entry to a mobility impaired person; whether they must use a lift, ramp or elevator it sets them apart from others. A senior center should be universally inclusive, particularly since a significant portion of those served have some level of mobility impairment.

The drop-off area should be large enough to accommodate shuttle buses and vans, and

where possible provide covered access. Additionally, this area should provide a temporary parking area to accommodate elders being picked up and dropped off in cars. A safe walking path from the main parking field to the building should be provided.

#### *Porch*

A front porch or small covered area with seating near the drop-off should provide an area out of the weather/sun for a patron waiting to be picked up.

#### *Terrace*

A partially shaded terrace with seating areas should be provided, where possible, to accommodate outdoor gatherings. This terrace should be accessible from public circulation, the lounge, and the multi-purpose room, and should face south or west.

#### *Garden*

A garden area for planting, casual gatherings or quiet retreats is desirable.

#### *Parking*

Town of Westford Zoning requires 1 parking space for every 200 gross square feet of building. For municipal use, this number may be determined by the Planning Board at Site Plan review. Based on the anticipated occupancy of the multipurpose room and per zoning requirements, the schematic design will focus on providing a range of 90 to 125 spaces, with space for future expansion. This should allow space for vans and shuttle busses. A dedicated loading area for the kitchen is recommended.

Square Feet	SF / Space	No. of Spaces
25,000	200	125
18,000*	200	90

\*18,000 square feet is based on the total building square footage with unoccupied basement storage and mechanical spaces subtracted out.

Parking spaces for elder use should be no less than 9'-6" wide and should be defined by double painted lines.

The following graphics illustrate the process of developing the program.

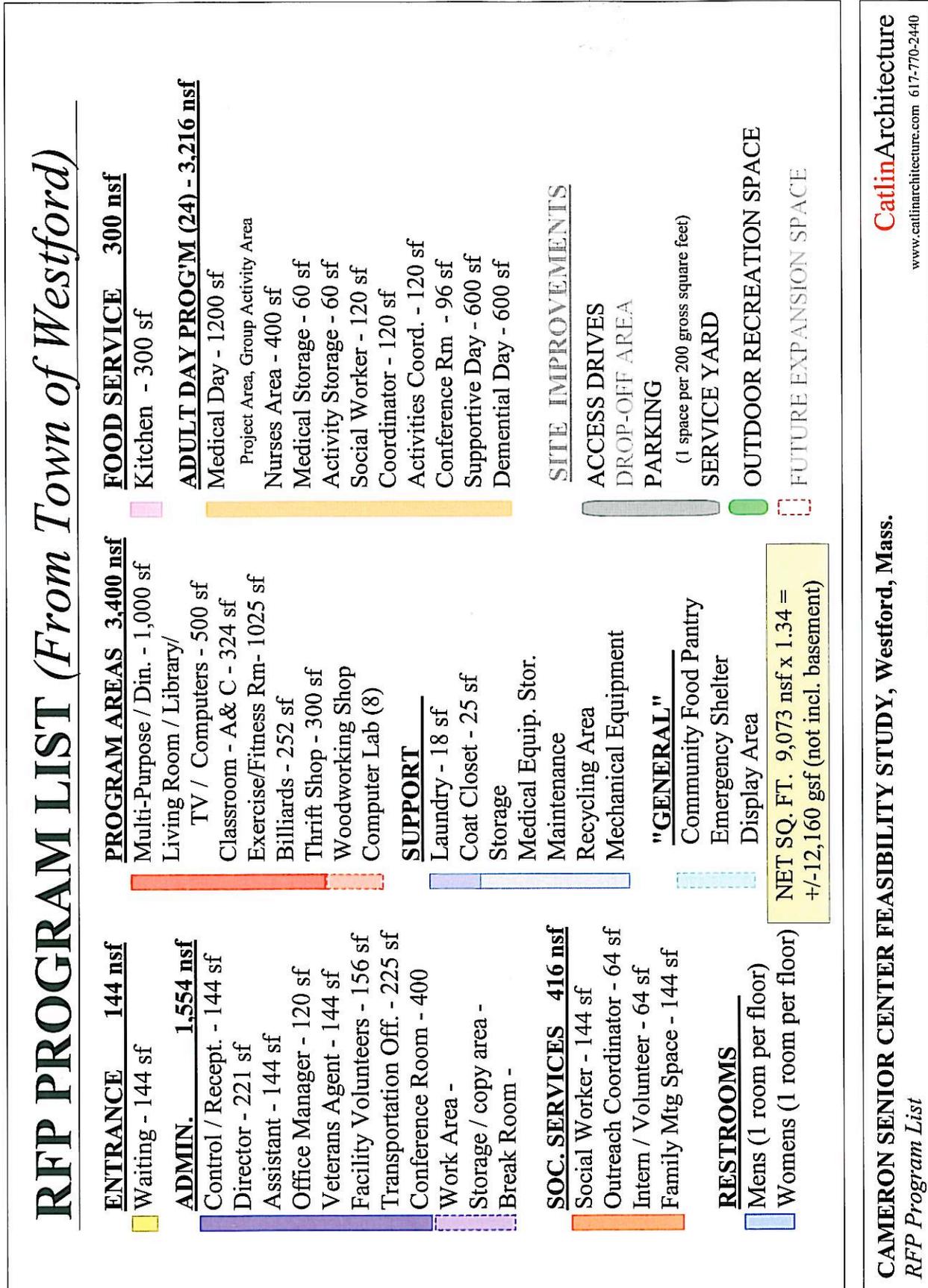
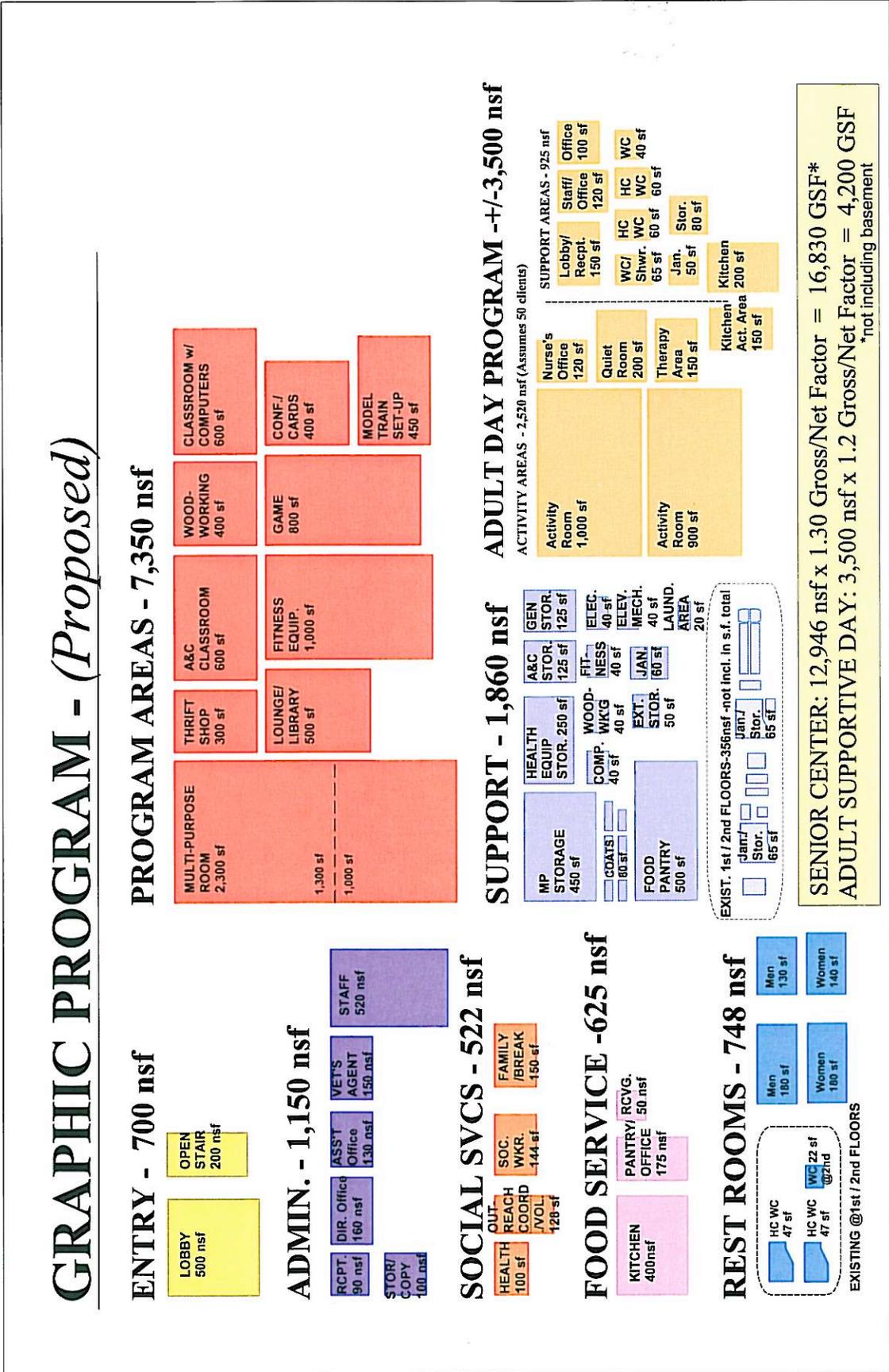


Figure 5.1 RFP Program List



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**CAMERON SENIOR CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY, Westford, Mass.**  
 Graphic Program of Proposed Facility

Figure 5.2 Graphic Program of Proposed Facility



### Population Statistics

According to MISER (Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Massachusetts, Amherst) mid-level projections and US Census Bureau statistics, the overall and elder population (60+ years) for the Town of Westford are as follows:

#### WESTFORD POPULATION DATA CENSUS/ MISER PROJECTION

Demographic	CENSUS		PROJECTION	
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Town Total	16,392	20,754	22,984	24,197
<b>Elder 60+</b>	<b>1,689</b>	<b>2,180</b>	<b>3,380</b>	<b>5,342</b>
School Age	3,714	5,131	5,949	5,097

*MISER-Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research, Mid-Level Projections, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, December 2003; US Census Bureau, Census 2000*

From the year 2000, the elder population is expected to more than double by the year 2020. In the year 2000, the elder population comprised 11% of the Town's population, in 2010 it is expected to be 15% and in 2020 it is expected to rise to 22%.

It is interesting to note the elder population (60+) as compared to the school age (5-19) population. As the elder population increases by close to 2.5, the school age population decreases slightly. As the percentage of elders increases from 11% to 22%, the percentage of school age children decreases from 25% to 21%, with a temporary increase in 2010.