

Webster, Fairport voters OK improvement projects

Both proposals were scaled-back versions

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USA TODAY NETWORK

Voters in Webster and Fairport approved a pair of pared-down capital improvement projects, less than a year after more ambitious versions were defeated at the polls.

In both cases the price tags were much lower than what voters rejected last December.

Turnout in both Fairport and Webster was more than 50% greater than it was in December 2022, when low participation and a lack of publicity helped allow groups of committed opponents to block passage.

What's in the Fairport capital improvement plan?

Voters in Fairport approved two referendums.

The first, for \$36.4 million project, will help make room at the high school for ninth graders who will no longer attend a standalone ninth-grade academy. It can be paid through existing local money and anticipated state aid. It passed 2,800 to 1,025.

Separately, voters also approved a \$9.5 million overhaul of the high school track and field facility, including an 800-person grandstand, a press box and a scoreboard. That referendum passed 2,165 to 1,625. Only the second project will require new tax funding: \$19.50 per \$100,000 of assessed value for 15 years, according to the district.

What's in the Webster capital improvement plan?

The capital project in Webster was broader, including additions and renovations at all 11 schools in the district. Webster voters approved the plan 1,626 to 829.

The most significant component is expanded space for a special education program at Willink Middle School. Both high schools will get new turf fields, while most other schools will replace or renovate their roofs, parking lots or bus loops, among other things. Compared to the December 2022 proposal, the district removed parts of the special education expansion at other schools and also delayed some of the work by a year, allowing it to retire previous debt before accruing more. The total price tag is \$85 million, of which \$75 million will be borrowed.

MORE BACKGROUND:

'The turnout and support for this (capital improvement project) are indicative of the Fairport and Perinton community's expectations and support for its schools,' Fairport Superintendent Brett Provenzano said in a statement. 'This project will keep the district's facilities planning efforts moving forward and support our district's expansive and student-centered programming for years to come.'

Justin Murphy is a veteran reporter at the Democrat and Chronicle and author of 'Your Children Are Very

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A rendering of the new track and field facility to be built at Fairport High School. LaBella Associates

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