

Senior Center Committee FAQs

- **What is an RFP?**

(updated 3/12/2025) A request for proposal (RFP) is an open request for proposals to complete a new project proposed by a company or other organization that issues it. It promotes competition and encourages alternative proposals for consideration by project planners. In our case, the Council on Aging (COA) asked the Town of Maynard to prepare an RFP for the Interim Senior Center.

- **How to assess the RFP Responses for the interim Maynard Senior Center?**

(updated 3/12/2025)

- After receiving submissions, the Town Administrator assembled a team to evaluate them based on the criteria outlined in the RFP document.
- The team convened, gathered individual evaluations, and determined to conduct a more thorough assessment of each area.
- The team decided to visit each site to gain a more personal and comprehensive understanding of its potential.
- The team conducted site visits, meeting representatives for each of the sites.
- The team made suggestions as to what could be done at each location to enhance the property for use as a Senior Center.
- The team will continue to reconvene to discuss their perspectives on each area.
- Ultimately, the team will provide the Town Administrator with a recommended proposer to provide a Letter of Award to. The Town Administrator will consider the results of the evaluation in providing the Select Board a recommended action, possibly including seeking authorization to finalize a lease with the selected proposer. A lease agreement's terms would reflect a proposal, and the agreement's execution would be contingent upon appropriation by Town Meeting.

To view the RFP responses, please go to:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/ma/tom/Board.nsf/vpublic?open>

You can access the documents by going to the Select Board meeting from Tuesday, February 4, 2025, opening the agenda, and scrolling to Category #9 "Senior Center" and opening the materials in the "Public Content" of that agenda item.

- **What input have we received from the seniors in town?**

(updated 3/12/2025) In partnership with UMass Boston, the COA has performed a community needs assessment. This will complement and update previous surveys conducted over many years to confirm the approach to this project. While each community is a little different, none of these assessments offer big surprises from the perspective of the needs and interest of seniors. The survey does help make minor tweaks to the programs, services, and offerings to ensure that Maynard is constantly improving and keeping up with the latest needs and interests of our growing senior population. To view the Assessment document, click [here](#).

Senior Center Committee FAQs

- **When are we planning on asking the town for money?**

(updated 03/12/2025) We are working with the Selectboard and Finance Committee to secure funding for a lease agreement for a suitable Interim Senior Center. The Selectboard has decided to place this item on the Town Warrant as an Override. Meanwhile, the Council on Aging (COA) and its Director are collaborating with the Town Administrator on the 2026 budget.

- **Are we considering combining it with a Community Center?**

(updated 03/12/2025) Our current priority is securing a lease for a stand-alone Interim Senior Center. However, this does not preclude future discussions about collaborating with others to utilize the space for additional activities.

- **What impact will this have on my taxes?**

(updated 03/12/2025) At this stage we are still gathering information and determining the potential funding sources to address the short-term and long-term Senior Center needs. We expect the impact to taxpayers to be fairly minimal in the near term as the funds needed to address the short-term needs and to start the feasibility design phase for the long-term solution are quite reasonable.

In the future, a decision will need to be made by the residents on whether they support the funding for construction of a new Senior Center, but we expect that decision will not need to be made for many years.

- **What is the budget for the Senior Center?** (updated 11/7/2024)

\$170,927 (Salaries - \$132,977; Expenses - \$37,950)

This includes the annual Formula Grant from the state at \$14.00 per senior (for FY2024) which equals \$37,394. Salaries are determined by union contracts. The Select Board recommended that expenses/budgets be level for 2024.

- **What other buildings have you looked at?**

(updated 11/7/2024) Other buildings that have been looked at include:

- 61-63 Summer St.
- Paper Store Bldg., Nason St.
- Mill and Main Buildings 6, 9, & 8
- Maynard Crossing
- 63 Great Rd
- Beijing School
- Former Walgreens on Main St.
- Imago School Bldg.
- 141 Parker St.
- River St. Laundromat
- Assabet Valley Boys & Girls Club
- Regionalization with Acton & Stow

Senior Center Committee FAQs

Previous questions and responses

- **Why is this project being planned now?**

This project has been in the planning stages for over 10 years. The process of defining building/space needs for any group in town (schools, fire stations, etc.) is a lengthy one requiring a lot of people's time and town input. Most of these projects take years of planning before they are completed. If we begin the detailed planning and professional design now, we can reasonably expect to complete the final product by 2030.

- **How many seniors currently live in town?**

The Town of Maynard has more than 10,000 residents, and more than 3,000, or 30%, of them are 60 years of age or older. The US population is aging at an unprecedented rate, and national demographers estimate that by 2050 the percentage of residents over the age of 60 will increase by 50%.

In Maynard the current 5-10 year projection is roughly:

50-55 yrs. = 154

56-60 yrs. = 729

61 and over = 3084

- **Where is the Senior Center?**

The Senior Center is currently housed in a conference room in the Maynard Golf Course clubhouse. This was thought to be a temporary home nearly a decade ago while efforts were made to create a new centralized Senior Center. The Council on Aging, COA, provides programs and services for Maynard's growing older adult population.

- **Who uses the Senior Center?**

While there are many seniors in Maynard who take advantage of the senior programs and services, the current space is so limited that it simply can't handle the volume of seniors who live in our community. Many of the most popular programs can't be held there because the space is too small, not universally accessible, and inadequate in many ways.

- **Who will use the new Senior Center?**

In addition to the current users, a new/different facility will allow for a significant increase in the number of seniors who otherwise couldn't attend due to the limitations of the current room. Other communities who have created new Senior Centers have seen a 400%-500% increase in usership.

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- **What's wrong with the current Senior Center?**

The current Senior Center room is 1,600sf which is less than 1/10th the size it should be based on state standards and Maynard's senior population.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs has general guidelines recommending that a town's Senior Center be sized between 4 and 5 square feet of space per senior. This number reflects the number of people who will use the space. <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/executive-office-of-elder-affairs> we currently do not have the actual link to the page yet, however, it is referred to during multiple Senior Center feasibilities studies.

In addition to being woefully undersized, the current Senior Center has the following deficiencies:

- The space is not universally accessible
- The space is not inclusive and welcoming
- The site is not accessible during most of the golf season, lack of parking
- The site is not accessible during the winter when there is ice and snow on the handicap ramps
- The location is removed from the community which perpetuates the isolation of Maynard's seniors
- The space cannot physically contain all of the types of programs and services that Maynard's seniors want and need
- Infrastructure of the golf course building is failing
- The roof leaks when there is heavy rain

- **Why does the Senior Center need to be bigger?**

Maynard's Senior Center room is so small that it significantly limits the types of programs and services that can be offered, and the lack of adequate and appropriate space means many of Maynard's seniors can't or won't participate. This results in the isolation of many of Maynard's seniors in their homes. They become disconnected from the community they love.

"High rates of social isolation and loneliness around the world have serious consequences for health and well-being. People without enough strong social connections are at higher risk of stroke, anxiety, dementia, depression, suicide and more," said WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. Nov 15, 2023

We can no longer turn Maynard's seniors away due to the inadequacies of the room that acts as the Senior Center in the clubhouse.

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- **Have we thought about using one of the other existing Town buildings for the Senior Center?**

We have. This has been studied in great detail many times over the past decade. The Town facilities simply do not have excess space that is appropriate for use as a Senior Center.

- **Could some of the programs be held at other locations in town?**

The sense of “community” the Senior Center fosters would be lost if the programs were scattered about town. The Senior Center should be a place people can congregate after an activity, stay for coffee, lunch, socialize or participate in another program. Many classes require more supervision than just the instructor, particularly in the case of medical emergency.

- **What programs are offered at the Senior Center?**

The Maynard Senior Center offers many programs and services, including:

- Health Insurance Counseling (SHINE)
- Tax Assistance and Preparation
- Fuel Assistance
- Legal Assistance
- Blood Pressure Clinics
- Zumba
- Pickle Ball
- Seated Senior Fitness
- Yoga
- Performing and Visual Arts
- Art Classes
- Book reads and Book Clubs
- Continuing Education
- Grab and Go Luncheons
- Organized Movie Showings
- Knitting club
- Organized games such as mahjong, dominoes, bingo, chess, and more
- Transportation Services

For an updated listing of programs and activities in the monthly newsletter access the town website: <https://www.townofmaynard-ma.gov/263/The-Maynard-Senior-Center>

- Many of the programs at the senior center are free.
- There is a minimal fee of \$2-\$4 for fitness classes, and \$20 for ten sessions of Pickleball (rented space)
- Special art classes: Class Fee: \$40.00 for eight weeks

Senior Center Committee FAQs

- **Why don't we regionalize with another town?**

A consistent sentiment emerged when discussing regionalization with Directors from neighboring towns like Stow, Acton, and Sudbury: they preferred to maintain senior centers exclusively for their communities. Their stance was rooted in the significant effort and dedication required to establish and sustain a senior center tailored to the needs of their residents. Many Directors emphasized the years of diligent planning and hard work it took to bring their centers to fruition. They expressed a sense of pride in their community-driven initiatives and highlighted the creativity and determination necessary to overcome challenges in the process. Consequently, they believed that each town, including Maynard, should undertake the necessary efforts independently to develop and maintain a senior center that best serves its residents.

- **If the Senior Center moves, what happens to the existing room at the Golf Course Clubhouse?**

The room would be available for the users of the Golf Course. Overall usage would be determined by the town.

- **Why don't we apply for grants or donations to fund this project?**

There are very few options with respect to grants, but we are working with our state representatives to try and secure a small grant to help us get started. Fundraising efforts will be made throughout this initiative through the Friends of Maynard Seniors.

- **What does the Select Board expect from this new committee?**

The Maynard Senior Center Committee is an advisory body to the Select Board; they will provide the Select Board with recommendations for a suitable senior center for Maynard residents. The Maynard Senior Center will be operated under the authority of the Maynard Council on Aging and its duly appointed director and board. The charge for the Senior Center Committee was approved by the Maynard Select Board on December 19, 2023.

The Select Board welcomes recommendations from the Senior Center Committee including the option of a lease agreement, new construction, or any other reasonable arrangement, to establish a suitable senior center. Only the Select Board is authorized to negotiate or execute any lease, purchase, or other agreement, under its duly authorized authority or through the Town Administrator and/or his office.

The Senior Center Committee shall expect to advocate at Town Meeting to execute those recommendations accepted by the Select Board for a suitable future Senior Center.

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The Senior Center Committee shall expect to advise the Town Administrator and Select Board on contracts, vendor relationships, construction and design plans, change orders, and any other matters pertinent to the execution of the Select Board's direction.

The Senior Center Committee shall report regularly to the Select Board on its progress towards developing recommendations, preparations for Town Meeting, and execution of approved plans thereafter.

- How many town officials / list job titles are involved in today's Senior Center operations?**

- Council on Aging Director
- Principal Clerk
- Council on Aging Van Service Drivers
- Town Administrator (Council on Aging Director reports directly to the TA)
- Department of Public Works
- Facilities Manager

- What programs is the Town currently financially supporting at the Senior Center?**

The Council on Aging's budget, from the Town's operating budget, supports various programs, including but not limited to: social events and special programs (art, crafts, cultural, educational, health and wellness). Included in the Council on Aging's budget are funding for office supplies, operational expenses, dues & memberships, utilities, and other miscellaneous expenses. The Council on Aging's operating budget has not increased over time except for changes in cost of utilities and staff salaries per union contracts.

- What town department is responsible for the Senior Center?**

The Council on Aging

It is the mission of the Maynard Council on Aging to promote and support healthy aging for the town's senior citizens age 60 and above. They will seek to assist seniors in maintaining dignity, independence and physical and psycho-social well-being through programs and services designed for them and their care givers.

Senior Center Committee FAQs

- **What are the site requirements to select a facility? Order them by highest priority.**

The Council on Aging Board has ranked priorities for a new facility in this order:

- Accessibility
- Parking
- Sufficient space to expand programs and increase attendance
- Preference for a location close to downtown Maynard/easy to access downtown Maynard

- **What programs does the Senior Center offer for those of us with mobility issues?**

While individuals with mobility issues need to be independent, whether when attending programs at the Senior Center or using the COA van service, we do our best to meet their needs.

As far as programs: for example, we offer seated fitness classes and instructors who work with participants to adapt the exercises to correspond to their abilities. Sometimes a caregiver or an aide will attend a class or activity (bingo, mahjong, movies, etc.) with the participant. In addition, presentations such as fall prevention and home safety are offered (as well as classes for balance in the past) which provide education to support/improve mobility.

In terms of accessing the Senior Center, the COA van service can provide transportation to the entrance of the Senior Center, enabling individuals the option of using the stairs or the handicapped walkway.

We provide information and referral to a wide array of social and professional services for specific needs to support daily living and functionality. As well, we have a durable medical equipment borrowing program.

If you have further questions please email the Director, Amy Loveless at:
aloveless@TownofMaynard.net

- **Will we have to pay for parking at the new Senior Center site?**

No, there is ample parking at the sites we have visited.
