

Newhall Foundations Repair Project
Demolition of the Former Middle School Buildings
Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: July 23, 2026

FAQs

Residents have raised several important questions, both at meetings and a survey tool. This document answers them as clearly and honestly as we can. Where a decision is still being worked out, we say so plainly and tell you when you can expect to hear more. This document will be updated routinely throughout the duration of the projects, shared at public meetings, and posted to the Town website.

Q. Will the advisory committee be able to weigh in on the project's contracts?

A. The project has a six-member advisory committee that meets monthly. It includes two community representatives from the neighborhood, a Town Council member, a representative from the Mayor's office, the Town Engineer, and the project manager. The committee reviews the project's progress, its spending, and major decisions and provides its input and recommendations. Because at least one community representative must be present for the committee to meet, the neighborhood always has a voice at the table when these matters are discussed.

Any contract must follow the Town's procurement process, and many require approval from the Legislative Council.

The Town's procurement rules are strict. For competitive bids, the Town is generally required to award the contract to the lowest – qualified – bidder, and every bid opening is open to the public. The team is working out where the advisory committee can fit into that process; one option is to involve the committee early, while the scope of work is being written, so residents help shape what a contractor is hired to do. All contractors must be properly licensed and insured, and the team is looking at whether a contractor's past performance can be weighed in the selection.

Residents also asked whether a performance bond could be required so homeowners would have recourse if a contractor caused damage. Bonding and insurance requirements are part of every construction agreement and scale with the size of the work; the Town will investigate what protections can be built in for homeowners.

Beyond the bid process itself, several outside reviews apply before work can proceed. Bid documents are reviewed by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD); any structure more than 100 years old is reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office; and the projects are submitted to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO). The Town is also making its best effort to hire minority- and locally owned businesses.

Homeowners will not be forced to work with any contractor they don't want to work with.

Q. What is the timeline for the demolition, and what happens if it isn't met?

A. The demolition bid package has been drafted and submitted to the town, and it is under review by its construction attorney with completion of final agency (DECD) (CHRO) review expected in August. Once approved for bidding, the bid, bid review, and award processes can take up to three (3) months. Once abatement and demolition begin, the timeline is based upon normal means and methods and is projected to take approximately six (6) months, providing no concealed or unknown conditions emerge.

or severe and/or prolonged weather conditions occur which would impact the schedule. If such events occur, the project schedule will be adjusted accordingly to reflect lost time.

Q. What will the land [former middle school property] be used for after the demolition?

A. An earlier proposal for a youth, arts, and recreation center is not moving forward, and no future use of the site has been decided. After the building comes down, the Town will run a community visioning process so that residents help shape what happens with the land. You will have the chance to weigh in, and we will announce how and when to take part.

The Hamden Newhall Neighborhood Association is already thinking ahead about possible options that could benefit the neighborhood to bring into that conversation.

Q. Will the Health Department talk with the community?

A. The Health Department operates separately from this project, but if residents would like to meet with them, the Town can help arrange that conversation. If you have a specific health concern in the meantime, you can contact the Quinnipiac Valley Health District directly at (516) 814-6893, or via email at info@qvhd.org.

Q. Some advisory committee members are also part of HNNA. How does that role fit into the projects?

A. The committee was set up on purpose to include neighborhood voices. Two of its six seats are reserved for community representatives, and the Hamden Newhall Neighborhood Association (HNNA) is a key community partner, so having HNNA members involved is by design. It is how we make sure residents' perspectives are built into the project rather than added as an afterthought.

The committee is advisory, which means it reviews and advises rather than making decisions on its own. That keeps everyone's role clear and transparent, and the community representatives are there to speak about residents' interests.

Q. What happens if the cost to repair a home is more than the home is worth?

A. For most homes, repair is the goal, and that is what the Repair Fund is built to do. In cases where repair is not feasible the Town, through a representative, may offer to purchase the home. Two things are firm about this:

It is voluntary. The choice is yours, and no one will be forced to sell as long as the home remains habitable. Current engineering assessments have not identified any threat to life, health, or safety.

The purchase value of each home will be based on Fair Market Value.

If your home falls into this category, the Town will talk with you directly. The town's intent is for affected homeowners to have a seat at the table to help develop a fair approach and not to be informed of it after the fact. Other stakeholders will part of this work as well, including the CT Department of Economic and Community Development which has a role given the State's funding of the project.

The town's project team sees its role as representing homeowners' interests and giving the homeowners as much say as possible.

STILL BEING WORKED OUT

The full details, including the support available to help a homeowner who chooses this option, are still being finalized. The affected homeowners will have the opportunity to take part in these discussions.

Q. Does this project affect our property value? And if so, why are our taxes higher?

A. First, how your taxes are set. Your assessment reflects 70% of your home's fair market value as of October 1, 2024. Your tax bill is that assessment multiplied by the Town's mill rate. Your bill can change because home values across Hamden changed, or because the mill rate changed, separate from anything about your individual home. Home values across Hamden rose sharply after 2020, which is part of why assessments and bills went up.

Second, what the repairs do. Completing foundation, drainage, and waterproofing work will not raise your assessment *unless your assessment has previously been lowered to reflect the damage*.

If you believe your assessment doesn't reflect your home's real condition, you have options. You can ask the Assessor's Office to inspect your property at any time. If a correction is warranted, they will adjust it for the next Grand List. You can also file with the Board of Assessment Appeals each year between February 1 and February 20, with hearings in early March and decisions sent afterward. The Assessor's Office can be reached at (203) 287-7121.

Q. Will there be steps to protect my property and my health from dust and poor air quality during construction?

A. Yes. Protecting residents' health and property is a core part of how the work is planned. At each home, the work includes dust and debris controls, site protection and cleaning, and safety controls. Managing dust and air quality is treated as a priority, and all digging and ground restoration follows the state environmental agency's (CTDEEP) requirements, with a licensed environmental professional providing oversight. The project team will be monitoring dust and air quality around the middle school site, and those results will be shared with residents through a QR code posted at the site and shared with the Hamden Newhall Neighborhood Association.

Q. I have a specific concern about my property during the work (for example, a swimming pool). Who should I contact?

A. The air-monitoring program is designed to keep visible dust from leaving the work site. For specific or personal concerns about your property, please contact the project team directly so they can give you an answer tailored to your situation.

Q. When will the work begin, how long will it take, and what are the target completion dates?

A. Demolition. The construction bid package has been drafted and submitted to the town, and it is under review by its construction attorney with completion of final agency (DECD) review expected in August. Final approval will lock in the start date. Once demolition begins, the work is estimated to take about six months. Early site preparation is already visible at the site.

A. Newhall Foundations Repair Project. Homes have been under engineering assessment by Haley & Aldrich since 2024, and about 145 properties have been assessed so far. The team has developed 27 property-specific repair plans, and construction is targeted to begin in fall 2026.

The work will be phased into groups of roughly 10 to 15 properties, organized by location and by the type of repair needed, so the neighborhood is not disrupted all at once. A construction manager will meet with each homeowner before work begins on their home, all repairs will meet or exceed building code, and no home is considered finished until both the engineer and the homeowner sign off. From the first property to the last, the overall program is expected to take about three years.

Q. Where can we see the schedule after the meeting, and can it be posted publicly (website and flyers)?

A. Yes. We can post the current project schedules on the project website (www.hamdenedc.com) so residents can follow progress. Meeting materials, including the slides presented at community meetings, will also be posted there.

Q. What happens if the timeline isn't met?

A. Timelines are treated as living documents. Updates to the project timelines will be shared with the community.

Q. Who is paying for this, and how is the project funded?

A. **Demolition. \$5.4M** through the CT Department of Economic and Community Development Community Investment Fund. **\$200K** from the Town's Community Development Block (CDBG) grant (blight), and **\$3M** in local funds.

A. **Newhall Foundations Repair Project:** The project has a total budget of approximately \$18M, funded through a combination of a State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development Community Investment Fund (Round 7) grant (**\$8M**), federal ARPA funds (**\$1.8M**), and locally appropriated municipal funds (**\$8.1M**).

Q. How did this become a Town of Hamden taxpayer responsibility rather than a State issue? Why isn't the State, CTDEEP, or the Attorney General covering the cost?

A. \$8.1M in local dollars have been appropriated to this project by the legislative council, and the town council also allocated \$1.8M from the American Rescue Plan Act for the assessments. The State of CT, through the Department of Economic and Community Development, has committed \$8M. Residents have asked why the original site-remediation parties, including Olin, are not covering this work. The project team noted that those parties were released by the State.

Q. What will the cost be to the taxpayer?

A. \$8.1M in local dollars have been committed to this project, and the town earmarked \$1.8M of its allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act for the assessments. The State has committed \$8M.

Q. Has Hamden received the funds approved by the State Bond Commission in December 2025?

A. The Community Investment Fund awards for both projects are still in the contracting phase. Funds will be disbursed to the town on a reimbursement basis.

Q. Will this project raise my property taxes or homeowners' tax bills?

A. The repair work itself is funded through the grant, ARPA, and municipal funds described above, and completing the repairs will not raise your assessment unless your assessment was previously lowered to reflect the damage. How the Town's overall budget and mill rate are set is a separate, town-wide matter.

Q. Who is doing the work and what is their experience with this kind of project?

A. **Demolition.** BL Companies was hired by the Town through a competitive bid process for the planning and specifications for the demolition project. 7 Summits Construction was hired by the town through a competitive bid process to serve as Construction Manager on the demolition project. The demolition contractor has not yet been selected but will be selected through a competitive bid process.

A. **Newhall Foundations.** The engineering evaluations of the homes are being performed by Haley & Aldrich, a firm with geotechnical and environmental engineering experience. The program and construction are being managed by 7 Summits Construction, selected through the Town's competitive RFP process, as the Program and Construction Manager. The construction vendors will be selected through the Town's competitive bid process. Homeowners will have final say of who enters their property/home.

Q. Will the repairs include replacing windows and doors damaged by the sinking foundation?

A. If the damage is deemed to have occurred from the foundation issue, the cost of repairing that damage will be covered by the project.

Q. Will I have a say in the repair plans for my home?

A. Yes. Participation is voluntary, and you approve the scope of work for your home. The construction manager will meet with you before work begins, and no repair is considered complete until the engineer, the Town, and you have all signed off.

Q. Will I need to move out temporarily during the repairs, and what support is available if I do?

A. Whether a home requires temporary relocation depends on the scope of work at that property. The support available to residents for temporary relocation, if applicable, is still being finalized.

Q. What about daily disruption, noise, vibrations to nearby homes, and pest control during the work?

A. Repairs are handled as a rolling, phased process across the neighborhood rather than all at once. Each property has its own micro-schedule and its own building permits, a construction manager meets with the homeowner before work starts, and the team stays in daily communication with homeowners while work is underway on their home. If a property is not already fenced, silt fencing is put up to define the work area. Specific questions about vibration or pest control at an individual home can be directed to the project team.

Q. If construction damages sidewalks or roads, will they be repaired?

A. Yes.

Q. How will success be measured, and who will decide when a home repair is complete?

A. Repair is measured against building code, and all work must meet or exceed it. A home is not considered complete until the engineer, the Town, and the homeowner all sign off on the work. Every property is guaranteed for one year after the Town approves it, and there are mechanisms for

homeowners to report any deficiencies during that period. The Town also intends to have monitoring by a licensed environmental professional (LEP) in place during construction.

Q. How do you decide which homes are eligible?

A. Eligibility is determined from multiple lines of evidence including the assessments of the geotechnical engineers, subsurface investigations, review of property documentation, and conversations with the homeowner. In general, a property qualifies if it was remediated by CTDEEP between 2010 and 2012 and has foundation or water issues related to waste fill and/or remediation at the property. Examples of eligible issues include foundation damage caused by waste fill below the house, water intrusion in basements caused by remediation activities, wet lawns caused by the poorly drained soil used for remediation, and other issues caused by unsatisfactory prior remediation activities. Homeowners are responsible for maintenance and repair of their property for conditions that are not caused by waste fill and/or remediation.

Q. What is the step-by-step process for my home?

A. The process runs in a set sequence: you respond to outreach and provide information; your property receives an engineering assessment; you are informed whether it is eligible; eligible properties are surveyed to locate their legal boundaries; you are told which repairs are eligible and, if you accept, construction documents are prepared; 7 Summits Construction sets up site logistics; construction and oversight take place; any unforeseen issues or changes are addressed; and finally the owner, the Town, and the engineer all accept the completed work.

Q. How are drainage and settling problems being addressed?

A. Haley & Aldrich is responsible for designing the foundation and drainage solutions, and the contractors that 7 Summits hires for the Town will carry them out, with the engineer signing off that the work matches the design. Haley & Aldrich's designs use a combination of methods to address each property's unique issues. The goal for foundation repairs is to repair existing damage and provide long-term stability for the foundation. The goal for drainage repairs is to reduce water intrusion into basements by moving water away from the foundation and to improve drainage of the property by sending water runoff underground.

Examples of foundation repairs include replacing portions of damaged foundation walls and floor slabs, repairing foundation cracks, and installing helical piles under foundations to transfer the weight of the house to stronger soils below the waste fill.

Examples of drainage repairs include replacing dry wells that were installed during remediation, installing underground water infiltration chambers to remove excess water from the yard and roof, installing wick drains in yards and sump pumps in basements, sealing foundation cracks and joints, applying exterior waterproofing, and improving exterior grading.

Q. Does this program cover rental or commercial properties, and has everyone been reached?

A. This program is for non-public properties within Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (CTDEEP) Consent Order Boundary and other qualifying remediated properties. Most properties in the Consent Order Boundary are residential. Multiple rounds of in-person outreach were conducted between 2024 and 2025, including multiple mailings of questionnaires to the 305 properties inside the Consent Order Boundary. Many homeowners did not respond to the outreach or declined the free assessment.

Q. What will it cost to repurpose the [former middle school] site, and who will benefit?

A. No use has been decided yet, so there is no repurposing cost to share. The outcome of the community visioning process will define the benefit to residents.

Q. Will the site genuinely benefit the neighborhood, and will the community's choice be honored this time?

A. The visioning process is being designed to center the residents most affected, so that the decision reflects what the community wants rather than a use chosen for them. Several residents referenced past experiences where they felt their input was not honored; that concern is noted.

Q. How will air quality be protected so the work doesn't cause health or environmental harm, including during drilling and jackhammering inside homes?

A. Haley & Aldrich will perform air monitoring at each property during repair work. An air monitor device will be set up outside of the house and will continuously collect readings of dust in the air. If the dust exceeds the allowable limit, it will send an alarm. Haley & Aldrich can provide homeowners with access to their property's air monitoring data and provide indoor air monitoring devices during interior repair work which generates dust.

During **demolition**, a dust-monitoring program runs around the perimeter of the site to keep dust from leaving it, and an air-monitoring program is in place to prevent visible dust from migrating off site. The monitoring results are available through a posted QR code and are shared with the Hamden Newhall Neighborhood Association.

Q. How will contaminants in the ground beneath the former school be handled during demolition without creating greater environmental danger?

A. The former school site meets the State's cleanup standards. During the earlier remediation, four feet of material was removed from the grassy areas, and the areas beneath the buildings will be capped with clean fill. That cap is recorded in the land records and cannot be disturbed; the Town had to obtain permission to carry out this work, and the site is subject to annual inspections plus a full inspection every five years by a licensed environmental professional.

Building materials at the school have been tested to determine what requires abatement, such as asbestos and lead. Those hazardous materials are fully removed from the site and properly disposed of before demolition, with the abatement and removal documented on site daily. Hazardous material must be transported under strict regulations (for example, asbestos must be containerized), and specific truck routes have not been finalized yet.

The report describing the remediation actions taken at the site, along with a hazardous-materials inventory, is posted on the project website.

Q. When the air monitors detect dust above the allowable limit, what happens next and what actions are taken?

A. If the air monitors detect dust above the allowable limit, the work will be stopped immediately, and the issue will be addressed before the work can continue.

Q. Who runs these meetings, the Town or a community group? Will there be accountability across current and future administrations? Will there be more than one session so everyone can attend? Will the neighborhood be consistently supported with resources?

A. Both projects are managed by the Town of Hamden, and as such, the town is accountable. The Hamden Newhall Neighborhood Association is a partner and assists with convening the community meetings. The makeup of the Oversight Advisory Committee, the quarterly community meetings, and the project websites are part of how the project keeps residents informed and involved.