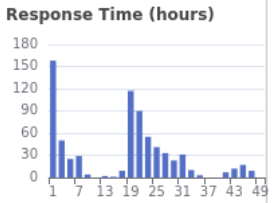
Survey Results: Public Safety Buildings

🏛 Survey Info - This survey was sent on behalf of the City of South Portland to the FlashVote community for South Portland, ME.

These FlashVote results are shared with local officials

733
Total Participants
399 of 741 initially invited (54%)
334 others
Margin of error: ± 5%

Applied Filter:
All Responses



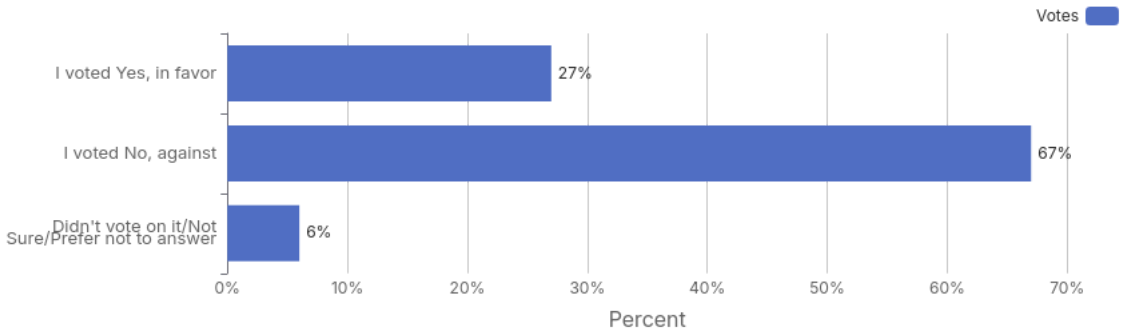
Started:
Nov 4, 2026 1:17pm EST
Ended:
Nov 6, 2026 1:15pm EST
Target Participants:
All South Portland

Q1 On the November 3, 2026 election ballot, the City of South Portland had a Public Safety Bond Question asking if residents would approve borrowing $88.6 million dollars to pay for new police and fire stations. According to the unofficial results the measure failed 63% No to 37% Yes.

If you remember, did you vote Yes or No on approving the $88.6 million bond?
(726 responses)

Survey response data for survey question 1

Options	**Votes** (726)
I voted Yes, in favor	27% (195)
I voted No, against	67% (489)
Didn't vote on it/Not Sure/Prefer not to answer	6% (42)

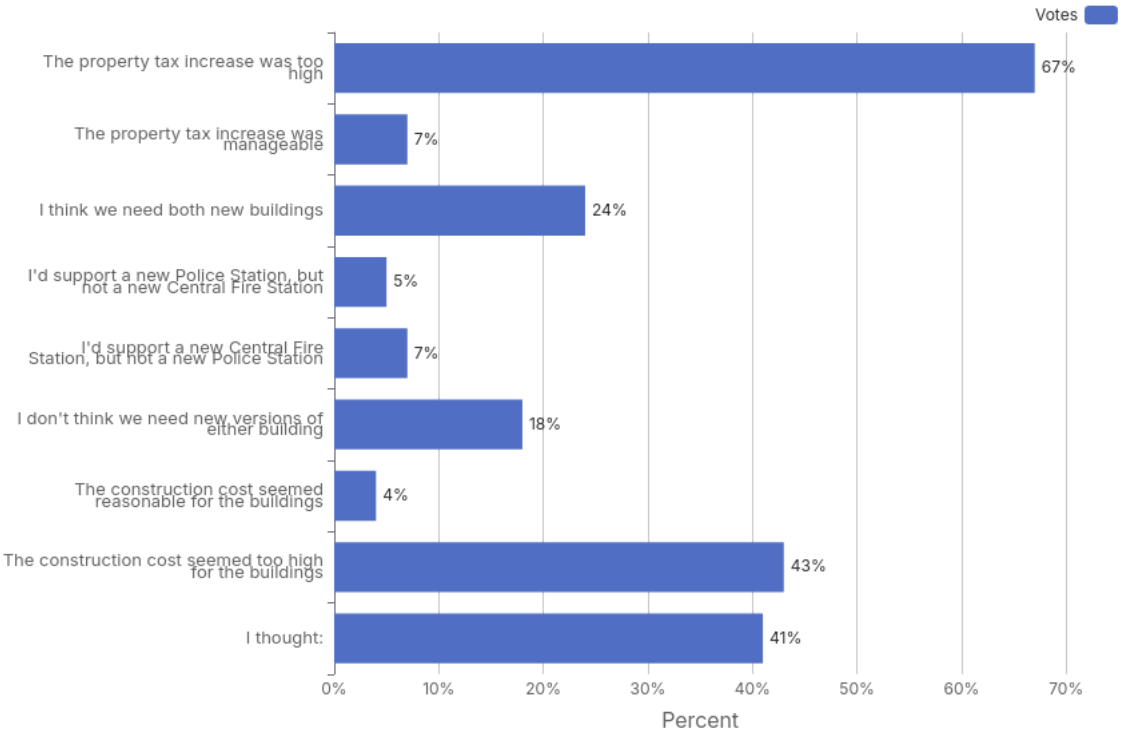


Q2 Which of the following were the biggest factors for you in thinking about how to vote on that bond question? (You can choose up to FOUR, if any)

(638 responses)

Survey response data for survey question 2

Options	**Votes** (638)
The property tax increase was too high	67% (429)
The property tax increase was manageable	7% (47)
I think we need both new buildings	24% (153)
I'd support a new Police Station, but not a new Central Fire Station	5% (30)
I'd support a new Central Fire Station, but not a new Police Station	7% (43)
I don't think we need new versions of either building	18% (112)
The construction cost seemed reasonable for the buildings	4% (24)
The construction cost seemed too high for the buildings	43% (277)
I thought:	41% (260)



Responses for "I thought":

spending that much on a police station isn't aligned with my values
We cannot have it all, sell some property or find alternate ways to pay. Enough spending!
The two projects should have been separate questions on the ballot
I just feel like we are throwing money around too wantonly - similar projects have cost way less.
The interest on the loan was way too high
We need better budgeting into the future to keep buildings maintained and taxes affordable
The plans and budget for repair of the current buildings should have been include as a comparison.
both building need superficial improvements, minor renovations. We do NOT need new buildings!
There needs to be cost offsets - fire unnecessary roles and sell assets
We need these buildings, and even though it costs a lot, it should be done.
SoPo has poor property maintance and zero budgeting expertise. The City Manager is at fault.
What was being asked for the station was a lot more than needed. Build with option to add in future
I was really upset that the Cash Corner building was purchased before the referendum passed.
I reluctantly voted for it but thought the tax increase was going to be hard to burden
if not now, when
South Portland officials are already wasting too much money supporting parasitic foreign &
While separate issues; asking for this much alongside the school budget crisis- $ feels mismanaged
That delaying the project would end up costing more.
Both, but one at a time. Leave one until another election.
Without more detail, I worry the money could go to more police surveillance and tactical equipment
There was little visible effort made to reduce costs or scale down the project

cost more in future

F

I support the police and the fire department and trust their judgment

We need to scale back, no need for the Taj Mahal.

I know it needs to be done and I voted yes for that reason but maybe don't lump the. Together.

Scarborough just built a combined public safety building for a fraction of the price.

It's unclear that building two new stations right now is the best path

Two years ago we were hot with over a 30% tax increase...and

I didn't scrutinize it deep enough to form a strong opinion but am generally trusting in our city c

The later property tax increases were a bit daunting as a future retired person.

The citizens have spoken and enough of spending our tax dollars foolishly

should have been doing deep maintenance for years , not patch jobs. And we dont need 2 fire in Cas

Needed renovations will be costly and of time-limited benefit

we may need the buildings but I distrust anything our city does from high taxes to overreaching

$88M is a ridiculous amount to spend on a police station, of all places.

The city needs to manage these costs. Sell Mahoney. Consolidate buildings.

Better utilization of the Mahoney Building and land; selling the Walgreens property.

There wasn’t a strong case made for the rationale. Prop tax increase vetoed interest re Spending.

Cape E new was $20 million. Can we go back to the drawing board with lower costs?

The city should have done and be doing reasonable continuing maintenance.

This city needs to prove that it has fiscal responsibility! It's wasteful and poorly run.

Couldn’t stomach this expenditure while our schools are going without

The financial mismanagement that has raised my taxes over the last few years

It may be better to separate each facility for bonding. Should not have bought Walgreen's w/o vote

Money being mismanaged. Buying Walgreens bothered me. Citizens should have had more say.

The idiots in Augusta made building ANYTHING so expensive, they’re even pricing cities out.

Sell Mahoney to developer for senior housing.

Despite the cost, due to the condition of the current facilities, the new buildings are necessary.

While both buildings are needed, the cost and property tax increase was high.

Prop tax has increased 50+% in the last 5 yrs already.

Right now the interest rates to finance are too high. Everyone needs to cut back including city

The issues with both buildings needs to be addressed.

I supported. Is a lot of money in current economy

Not enough done to explain reasons, costs, and comparisons to similar projects elsewhere.

Property taxes were recently just raised. Wait another couple of years to ask again.

Bad taste to close a school/fire teachers and then ask for that much money for this.

We plan on moving out of State in the near future and the tax implications won't effect me!

municipal spending is absurdly out of control; private employers don't spend nearly that much

Need to find a different funding source for this project. Tax increase is not sustainable.

A police sub-station is doable on the Walgreen's property, and a lot less costly to taxpayers.

Our resources are better spent elsewhere

Why did we (the city) buy land for the police station BEFORE WE VIoted on it?

Too much money when everything is just so expensive right now, not top priority for spending

The cost would be greater to update the current buildings to code versus building a new space

Build new fire station but renovate existing police station. Split referendum into two questions

Explore other options in SoPo. Can we revisit The Mahoney?

We shouldn't give the police any more money

The city has lost trust as good stewards of our tax money. Let's explore other funding options

Would much rather invest in schools and education than police who have supported ICE and flock

The need was well documented

The issues were not going to go away and the sooner we did it the cheaper it would be.

the reporting of long standing deferred maintenance was disturbing.

I worry about the conditions our first responders are working in and want to improve them

The city has didn't take good care of existing buildings and I didn't trust them with new ones

There wasn't enough detail on the estimated costs if we didn't vote yes

The city is absolutely reckless with spending—go through the spending and make cuts!

Fix the bldgs for 1/4 of the cost. Next ask will be City Hall at Mahoney.

Both buildings are needed, so I voted yes, but ultimately the cost really was too much for resident

Taxes are to high in South Portland !

It will never be less expensive to deal with this issue than right now.

Police sub-station on Walgreen's site.

Why haven't we maintained these buildings over the years??

Why buy Walgreens without public input first? This angered me -- sell this building.

We're squeezed by the economy now,use orsell Kaler to offset costs since it closed 4 no good reason

Current buildings should have been maintained. City staff is out of control on spending & tax incre

Our police and firefighters deserve better working conditions

SoPo should never have sold the armory in the first place. Now we will have to pay a lot more.

Especially after closing a school and laying off multiple staff members, it was too much

I did not want the central fire station to be moved. Currently, it is in the central municipal area

We need new buildings but my neighbors cannot afford an increase in property taxes due to the cost.

Renovation!

I think between this and Mahoney, residents felt that a more comprehensive plan was needed.

I do not want to finance building. Pay for them now if we need them. Or do a short 5 year finance.

The cost of borrowing was too high. I am very much in favor of the new police station!

It’s a NO

No critical cost analysis or value engineering attempt made.

The price tag was just too high.

I want my kid and their peers to have happy and effective first responders. That comes with a cost.

We did the “build crawl” and heard and saw all the reasons why we need buildings. It’s economical

The city needs to actually "budget" for these types of improvements, not just pass the cost along

I held my nose and voted yes.

There wasn’t enough budget breakdown that clearly showed costs related to upgrading existing

Maintain current buildings!

New facilities are a more responsible investment than continued maintenance and repair of existing.

Voted yes with trepidation. Voted yes out of concern for the safety of fire and police personnel.

Pare down the designs. These buildings are needed, but there has to be cuts made to the wish lists

cost WAS too high

The west side of the city deserves more than a new police hq. This was misplaced prioritization.

We are retirees. Our income is sufficient, but inelastic. Unlike property taxes in this city.

I could not support this knowing that the school department continues to see serious cuts annually

Stop collecting taxes for residents and spending on those who do not contribute and use those funds

South Portland taxes are outrageous

Cost is going to suck, but its going nowhere but up after this.

Our taxes are already so high! Why not try fundraising or applying for grants to cover the cost.

The city needs to develop a comprehensive plan to evaluate all city buildings, city and school, to

The fire station should be closed and consolidated into the existing two new fire stations.

There was a lack of communication and transparency. The building was purchased without voter input

If this money is spent how do we know the buildings will be maintained,the current buildings havent

I don’t think the city should have purchased a building before a vote was held.

Most people believe the disrepair the buildings are in is due to intentional lack of maintenance

City kept buying biologist are not yet used- Mahoney could be housing

At this time purposely adding expenses to an economy that is already unsustainable. It is just noe.

78 positions eliminated from school dept caused unsafe conditions v. spend 88mil on a BUILDING??

I have faith that the city council would not support such an expensive project if it wasn't needed.

We need more police. They are very busy with all that is happening in SoPo. We need more police

The city is also looking to spend far too much on the old Mahoney, STOP spending & lower our taxes

Put police and fire station separate. Space out the costs

The price was off the chart and we simply cannot afford more crushing taxes.

This city is fiscally irresponsible and looks at tax payers as endless sources of money.

You can rebuild on-site a joint building sharing common areas like Scarborough.

It was extremely presumptuous for the city to purchase the property in the first place. The Mahoney

Too much money.

Get rid of Mahoney then try again. This city spends more than we can afford and does not care

As a former first responder these two stations were30-40% too large

It is not the right time given the economic environment we are in right now.

I don’t want to lose good public servants to other municipalities that might have better facilities

Repair the old buildings

I think this is too expensive, and I know we need to do something and costs will only get higher

The city needs to maintain current buildings.

The buildings were outlandish and included items - like gyms - that are entirely unnecessary.

The city does not prioritize spending well which lead us to these “emergency” bond issues.

Fix what we have , it will not cost 150 million

I feel like there is a better approach to this. I will reach out to the city with more comments

One at a time with required maintenance part of the deal.

We need more funding from the state or other sources than property taxes

The grumpy old farts on FB and Nextdoor got to determine the tenor of this "conversation."

You just doubled property taxes in the last couple of years. Enough is enough. Find funding elsewhe

It may necessary but there are more pressing needs first. Buying thr land first was a mistake

The need for both facilities is very high and the cost will only be more expensive in the future

I support the idea but my property taxes are up 4k in the past 4 years. It has to stop.

I need to know that you are being responsible with the tax dollars we are already paying.

Why can't you just combined fire stations at cash corner and let the police stay and fix that buil

Given 2 relatively new fire stations and this seems like a reward for not doing maintenance.

I don’t think cash corner is the right place for new police

Investing in infrastructure will lead to better outcomes, such as improved police and fire services

Old infrastructure requires investment.

Taxes are soaring and unaffordable - we need to repair the existing buildings.

The money could be spent in other parts of our community.

We need this, let’s bite the bullet now and not kick it down the road.

More taxes are unconscionable/pay current debt way down before adding more.

The buildings are outdated and unsafe. They need to be replaced to protect our first responders

Stay within your budget like we have to.

I think the city should consider repairing and repurposing existing buildings.

When we can't pay for groceries and gas, it's just too much to ask right now.

Renovation would be more reasonable

This city is overspending the taxpayers money. When will it stop? Sell the buildings not in use.

Cash Corner just got a new fire station in 2021. Consider repairs/a cheaper option for PD.

You guys cannot continue to raise taxes and suck your residents dry for luxury items

You bought property before the bond passed. We already have many vacant buildings.

We don’t need another new fire station.

we need a functioning facility not an overpriced beautiful building. consider needs not wants

Since the fireman’s Union endorsed Susan Collin’s over Troy, go ask her for the money.

We could build both for less. We don’t need to be fancy here. Also the interest rate was way too mu

TOO much all at once. I agree that we need better facilities, but this is TOO expensive.

The city did t listen to anyone and hasn’t for years

The city already has a lot of debt that has created high levels of hardship on the tax payers.

Does 88 million include luxury bells and whistles not really necessary that we have to pay for?

that the City has been an irresponsible steward of the City’s assets and tax money.

Our vote is private, you shouldn

Sell Mahoney and pay for it

One project at a time.

The amount was too much,too soon after horrendous cuts to the schools last spring.

A lot of costs have already been sunk for these plans

I support usually support bond proposals but this is too high a cost

I could see a fire station our firefighters sleep, cook and live there on there shifts, police dont

South Portland increases our taxes significantly two years in a row. We can’t afford more taxes.

As a retired career firefighter who just moved to the area I knew that station needed replacement

Bad timing. Sort the schools out first. I support our uniformed services,

Invest in schools and services, not police. What is the least amount of $ we can spend to update?

The public service level from police is terrible why are you threatening worse

Public safety officials need new buildings- they deserve nothing less.

With the already high taxes. Sopo needs to cut back. Not spend more. Sell, save then build

Although I voted for the buildings, I would have preferred a vote on PD first, then later on FD

I voted for it, but the city could've done more to explain the costs. Was $88M the only option?

you spend money like it’s yours. we are being taxed out of our homes.

Replace one then wait a few years, then next. And cheaper. Cash Corner station was less than $10k!

Need to sell Mahoney to housing developer and use that money to reduce cost of police/fire upgrades

It will end up costing us more to keep patching up the most important buildings in the city

I'm not paying for a station that cooperates with ICE

both are definitely needed, do it now rather than put it off until later and higher expense

It is an important investment to support and retain the staff the perform important public services

Why aren't we utilizing buildings we already own? Why did the city buy the Walgreens building?

The outstanding debt burden doesnt specify the term(s) of existing debt

The modernization/repair cost for the police station were not well explained to the public.

Purchasing the cash corner building before voter approval was puzzling! Police station embarrassmen

Needed, Concerned about the amount of debt that the city has, how much this will increase taxes

Pay off current debt

"NO" for now, not "NO" forever.

SoPo needs to do a better job of maintaining existing structures, landscaping, infrastructure

We need to support infrastructure that will last, and support our public safety departments.

The City needs to first sell the Mahoney School to show seriousness about tax savings.

Now sell the building at cash corner.

The police should be working in the community not sitting in a building

The city should sell Walgreens and Mahoney and use the proceeds to repair police and fire departmen

Does the City know what base care building repair cost would be? What happens if we do nothing?

If South Portland maintained their existing buildings properly we wouldn't need new buildings

If we used the money to buy Walgreens to make repairs it would go a long way.

Everybody is concerned about our property taxes going up and it feels like it is out of control.

it was WRONG that someone purchased the Walgreens building for something that has been approved.

On a fixed income and barely afford the most recent tx increase.

No tax increase. Sell or renovated other properties.

Determine how buildings were mismanaged, Cole up with plan to not deter maintenance in future

The city over spends

The city needs to explore new sources of revenue rather than pushing costs on to homeowners.

There must be grant money available

the City Manager has done a poor job of planning long term for city expenses

Why did the city neglect these buildings they admitted it

The city is trying to join both sides of the city

I wasn't convinced we needed to completely replace both buildings and it was very expensivd

Fire Administration should move to Cash Corner permanently. Then the current central fire could

It didn’t appear that creative options were considered vs. all or nothing.

If it was you paying for it out of your pocket, I’m guessing you’d find another way.

Ishould wait until the feasibility committee looks into Mahoney School before going forward

If we don't have money for our schools, then we don't have money to replace these buildings

Bad timing! Everything is going up in prices. Maybe in a few years.

Didn't like the city buying the Walgreens site before the financing. Now we own a liability.

Poor planning by the city-the proposal was previously rejected. Same plan.

The city needs to get ALL spending under control buying the location was presumptive even with TIF

Prioritize protecting the health and safety of the FFs as much as they do us everyday.

I think we owe our fire and police personnel safe, healthy workplaces

Do not keep pressing to build these buildings. The citizens have already spoken at the ballot box.

Recent tax increases were crippling for p like me who are seniors on

The city chooses to defer maintenance and rehab for more expensive replacements.

More data needed to understand current/projected service and relation to current/proposed buildings

Lack of transparency and consideration of community input has left me with serious doubts

This project does nothing to update / replace the other city buildings so when is that coming.

Too much tax increase- bad timing. Maybe in a few years.

Property taxes are already way too high.

Property selection for police station inappropriate; dangerous intersection, distance from tourists

That seems like a lot of money right now, a similar figure that was for Mahoney

If they need more debt they should figure out how to use the increase in my property taxes for that

Even though there are other pressing needs, if we don't do this soon, the cost will only go up.

Not enough info available for the average voter. What happened with Mahoney?

"Use it up, wear it out. Make it do, or do without." We just don't need to be that fancy.

There has to be other options that are less expensive; remodel current buildings, or use buildings.

Don’t sell the new land at Walgreens! You’ll need it eventually

likely more expensive to continue operating/fixing old buildings than to build new

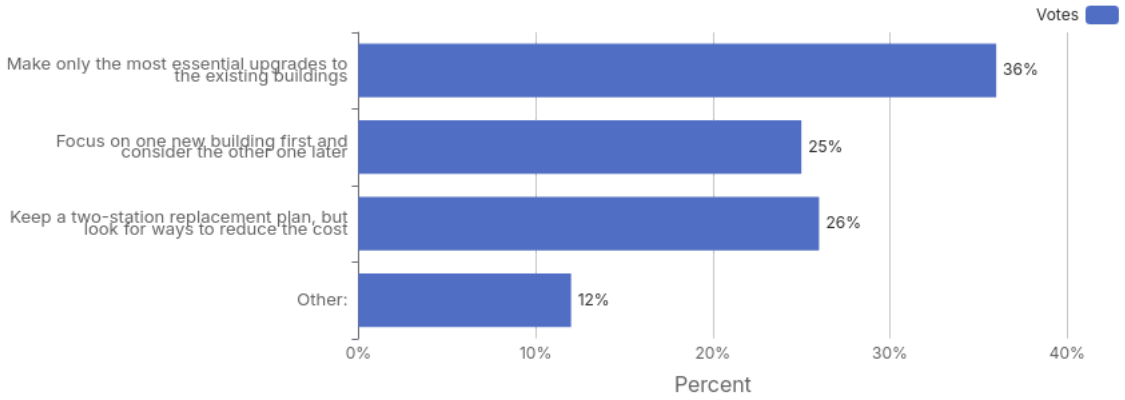
I will always support building and construction. Construction prices only go up.

Q3 Keeping in mind that not doing some things now may lead to significantly higher costs later and may impact future service levels, which approach makes the most sense for the City to consider next for the Police and Central Fire Station facilities?

(665 responses)

Survey response data for survey question 3

Options	**Votes** (665)
Make only the most essential upgrades to the existing buildings	36% (239)
Focus on one new building first and consider the other one later	25% (163)
Keep a two-station replacement plan, but look for ways to reduce the cost	26% (176)
Other:	12% (80)



Responses for "Other":

I'm open to the first or second option assuming both are really needed with a lower cost

relook at a joint public safety building.

Replace Police. Fire has newer buildings at Cash corner and Western Ave.

I don’t know.

Too much already being wasted supporting parasitic aliens !

Build these now

Build fire station and reconsider what is necessary for a police station

Kaler school is available

I don’t know what is ultimately the most cost-effective

Scarborough was able to replace its public service building for 1/4 of your proposed cost.

Must manage all projects better and plan ahead.

Both buildings should have lasted longer than they seem to have done. Proper care and maintainance

Get the 2.5 mil back for the building you can’t use, and do some maintenance

Reduce scope of the projects and wait for better financing rates. Seek federal / state assistance.

Maybe not spend so much taxpayer money trying to sell it to us

Find a way that does not cost over 88 million

Do your jobs and stop worrying what buildings they are in. My house is fine - you'll get by

Taxes are so high I can't fix my own house. If I have to suffer...

Reconsider options for both fire and police.

Attempt to do the most cost-effective process.

New fire station, renovate current police station, two referendum questions

Explore other public and private funding for new buildings and may have to separate them to vote on

Make appropriate upgrades to existing buildings, doesn’t need to be most essential

Whatever doesnt cost us citizens to pay more

Reconsider options for both police and fire.

Like all residences in the city of south portland, buildings need to be maintained/kept up to date

There hasn’t been a satisfactory answer why this bond was $90M but Scarborough built both for $21M

Keep the two station plan, but sell Kaler or retrofit it to be the new dual station.

we should be setting aside money for replaement and upgrades of EVERYTHING

It’s a NO

This is needed. I think the problem is getting across to the community, how bad the buildings are.

Find alternate ways to pay for these upgrades, such as sell Mahoney or even Kaler now

Figure out something that does not increase my property tax!

Plan for long-term capital expenditures - pass a plan, not a tax increase.

Stop collecting taxes for residents and spending on those who do not contribute and use those funds

We don’t need new buildings. We need buildings to be renovated and then maintain!

Consolidate close fire station and reduce cost to renovate police station

Finish the repurposing of Mahoney school before taking on new projects

Clearly outline cost differences between all of these options

Fix the building that’s there. Don’t need new ones. Just do the code upgrades to current.

you missed sell Mahoney and put that towards it. why the hard on to keep it?

Use what we have and get it to current standard, like the developers will do.

city needs to do more research on all fronts. Reduce property taxes, have accurate a accounting.

Is it possible to consolidate and have ONE central Police AND Fire station??

Each makes sense, but the people of South Portland cannot afford. UseFundraising or corporate taxes

Figure out a way to make this a 100/year on average increase in taxes. Or find other cuts to offset

Don’t raise taxes. Already too high

Look at less expensive options..the buildings were excessive as compared to other communities.

Make upgrades that bring the buildings to new standards - not just bare minimum.

Pay down existing debt before adding more. Can’t afford all the spending.

I don't understand what are choices are with a lower cost. But cost consideration has to come first

Again how about you don’t increase taxes again in your crappy city that I can’t wait to leave

80 million is way too much. Give us more budget friendly options. Don’t let repairs slide.

I support a new police station

Now you are worried about future costs.. why was t it being doe already

These buildings should have been maintained and updated from the beginning.

Tell us why it's so essential to have a whole new building and location

The buildings were show pieces, we need functional, well built buildings.

Finish the Mahoney project.

Reduce scope of police station. Reevaluate if we require a central fire station considering we hav

Decrease the size of the building

stop spending money and take care of what you have. stop over taxing us.

Explore private public partnership to deliver the appropriate level of quality

This is a leading question. The approach should be to communicate tax impacts vs debt levels

I would need more information to weigh in on this

What happened to Mahoney Middle School Plans?

Maintain the current buildings they are not too old to repair!!

No new taxes. Sell or renovate one building 1st

The city doesn’t have the money without adding unreasonable debt

Find alternative funding through federal grants that DO NOT RAISE TAXES

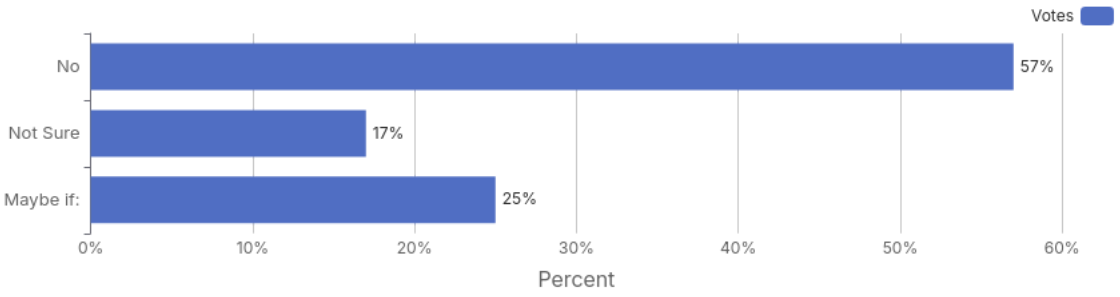
I don’t know enough about it
Cost is the issue for me. I don’t know the best solution.
Downsize and modernize Central Fire. Move admin to Cash Corner permanently
Get a local small business owner to solve this problem. Government never solves anything.
Find a better and more cost effective. Have a ten year plan.
Does expansion of the existing fire and police station buildings exist?
Sell off other vacant city owned buildings and use the money secured from those sales to build the
Build a combined facility
Whats the need - Im supportive but how can I support if I dont know what the needs are and how to s
You did not do anything for years and are now desperate, but both at once is too much.

Q4 Is there anything that might have changed how you voted?

(659 responses)

Survey response data for survey question 4

Options	**Votes** (659)
No	57% (376)
Not Sure	17% (109)
Maybe if:	25% (167)



Responses for "Maybe if":

Taxes were not increased, they are already too high
It was made more clear why this large cost was necessary
Separate bond questions for fire and police; drastically reduce scope of police project
the police didn't already receive as much public money as they do
Reduce waste at the city - this should be net neutral for tax payers

I'd been forewarned years ago of these needs, like when we were planning to renovate Mahoney

The economy was better, inflation weren't so high, and grants were available to offset high costs.

It didn't feel like we're being cost-effective with our current unoccupied buildings.

I would have voted for if the money was not coming from property taxes.

One building at a time. Overall amount was too high

School budget was not so bad

The cost for each were manageable and I received enough money additionally to pay the tax

The city had not pushed this at the same time as Mahoney, water pump, and football field

Less costly build, decrease costs in other areas, other funding sources

No tax increase

There was a guarantee that this would be the only increase in taxes.

The costs were lower

Bad timing...when everything in our lives is becoming more expensive, ANOTHER tax hike is impossible

We approve some projects that increase the tax revenue to offset the cost of the bonds

I could trust anything our city council does. E.G. How are we benefiting from the solar field?

wasted money!!! buying walgreen site-not justified and then asking for $$

Better utilization of the Mahoney building & land, and the Walgreens property is sold.

Lower cost per building

I saw more financial responsibility and accountability

I had heard a good rationale for how this would actually save the city money.

Provide costs and tax burden of required maintenance to existing buildings

Public comments had had any impact on the design or scope

There was upkeep on current buildings. If citizens got to vote of buying Walgreens.

it cost less

Sell Mahoney for income

The price was not completely outrageous - we all have stuff that needs to be fixed

Capital improvement program; you have a placeholder; u knew u asked for way more than you needed.

The cost had been reasonable

We were already shell-shocked money wise by the Mahoney School "refurbishment" cost. We can't affor

The City secured a diversified capital stack where public bond $$ is just one (non-dominant) part

Lower cost

We understood the actual numbers and costs and greater detail

Our taxes hadn't already substantially increased. They are getting completely out of hand.

I believe SP is taking their taxpayers for granted, when is enough enough

the city didn't have a history of letting their buildings fall apart then begging for new ones

More information had been shared with me about the proposal and if my taxes were not already high
The costs to the residents wasn’t so high and it was clearer how many years we’d have those
There was more transparency on the process and they didn’t just buy Walgreens first.
We knew more about what a no vote would cost
Our taxes were not already unmanageable. Manage your budgets like we have to manage our homes!
We have told you we cannot fund the grand ideas for Mahoney and these grandiose buildings.
I voted for both buildings
No ! Why did the city buy the Walgreen property with out taxpayers consent ????
I would have voted no if Central Fire goes anywhere else
Too much mismanagement of funds. There needs to be a full transparency and audit to prove integrity
It was for police only. We don’t need a new Central Fire Station. Renovate in place.
The cost were substantially lower and the city hadn't sold useable property years ago.
The cost wasn't so high, one station at a time is more reasonable
The central fire station was in the same location
Were able to get more grants to offset the cost to residents
It was not so expensive
The city simply sold Mahoney so that potential cost was not looming over voters.
Short term financing
The price tag was much lower
The cost to repay the bond were lower.
Less expensive. It was over the top.
The costs we’re significantly lower
If it wasn’t for my neighbor who told me how bad it was, I would not have known how dire the situat
I may have voted against it had I considered the full expense and impact of all citizens of SoPo
The city cut spending elsewhere and made efforts to reduce costs. It is easy spending others money.
Budget breakdown
If a new PDHQ was part of a larger goal of shifting to community safety, with tangible examples.
Costs could be offset. We have Mahoney, Kaler, can those spaces bring in funds?
See prior answer. No plan, no vote for more tax increases.
We had a plan to repair the old buildings
The taxes hadn’t already increased so much.
I was a property owner in South Portland. I am a renter.
Stop collecting taxes for residents and spending on those who do not contribute and use those funds
We learn to manage the budget without increasing taxes. No one can afford higher taxes.
a much cheaper option. It doesn't make sense to build 2 at the same time, for tax purposes.

Less was expected of already struggling residents
Taxes were lower, already paying to much to stay in retirement. Lived my entire life and won’t be
It hadnt been 88 MILLION DOLLARS. That's an absurdly high cost, esp during an affordability crisis.
if the price was cut in half and the city had funds from selling other properties to put towards it
Reduce the scope of both projects, look at real upgrades and updates on current building.
They priced shared building with less frills on same site. u could have applied money spent to it
Considerably less money. Considerably less interest on loan.
Half the size.
Lower cost and not deferring maintenance on old building
Cost was less, tax impact was explained
The city would stop speculating in real estate and actually made an effort to cut costs
The city would reduce spending in other places.
No new money for the police. Cut the police budget and fire the police chief who worked with ICE.
Cost of new buildings was reduced.
I paid any attention to those grumpy old farts.
Get rid of Mahoney, What's the plan for Kaler School building ???
The added expense was balanced with reductions elsewhere
No tax & cost too high. Taxes are killing us. STOP IT!
If fire was separate from police I would have said yes to fire station
Lower cost. Sell Mahoney to pay for it
LOWER PROPERTY TAXES! LOWER THE MIL RATE!
If we focused on using what we have instead of always feeding the "new build" mentality.
Taxes and other municipal expenses already too high
It cost less.
Other options were available. What would happen to the existing 2021 Cash Corner station? Wasteful.
Tax increases haven’t been so high the last few years and the threat of new costs like trash bags
They were able to understand why the cost was significantly higher than renovating central station
There was more care given to developing a plan with reasonable costs. Council is unqualified.
cost was significantly cheaper- we do t need a palatial place like scarborough
If alternative options were presented that demonstrated that all approaches available to vote
Cost/tax burden was not so high. Let’s sell some things and allocate the money to this endeavor.
If not for the endorsement of Susan Collin’s by the fireman’s union
The cost was less.
the City Council understood that the City’s needs are modest and diversifying the tax base occur.
Cost seemed high. Was it put out to bid. Maybe police station first and look at fixing fire.

There was new commercial development and retirement of existing debt. Stop deterring maintenace

Why do we need these buildings to be so big. I think the people in charge are dreaming big.

Schools budget wasn't so difficult so recently

Only fire station, not police station. The police get enough of our tax dollars as it is.

I had more clarity on the plan

The burden was not placed on citizens and came from federal funds or grants or sharing w/othertowns

The Council commited to significant cuts such as eliminating the sustainability department fully.

Our taxes had not risen so much in the past 2 years

Way too much money. Tax payer burden unmanageable for 2 person professional incomes with 1 child.

Grants or state funding to pay for the new facilities. Be creative

I would have voted yes if I knew the city council was making an effort to reduce costs elsewhere.

It was financially realistic and in line with our city's size

The Price tag was HALF of what was quoted.

There was no tax increase

I cannot take a $500/year tax hike for this project alone.

Our taxes hadn't almost doubled in the last 10 years

They hadn't just closed our elementary school and played off dozens of school employees

Our taxes are already too high

City sold Mahoney School and put that money to the Fire / Police project.

The city approves projects like Yard South that will bring in significant tax revenue

The council respected citizens. They put me through hell when expanding my home and building my biz

City Council spent more time on City needs and less on Politics - ie. ICE

1. The Cost of living wasn't so high. 2.Maintenance had been better managed over the years.

The property tax increase wasn't so high

No new taxes! Sell or renovate another properties.

Less expensive, justify costs. Explain plan to stop deferring maintenance in future

The city didn't want to carry debt and could afford it

$88 million dollars were instead meant for public services like addiction and mental health help.

Better communication about needs, promise to budget for more regular updates to avoid

The cost wasn't so high. If there were ways to get federal or state funding to supplement it.

They explained why it cost so much more than the cash corner station.

The City should have a phased master plan for FD, PD and City Hall. Sell Mahoney

Communicate whether other options were considered

I feel that the cost was too much. Not thought out well

we invested in our school department first

The tax hit was more reasonable considering the sewer tax hit
It was different options to vote on. Clumping them together it seemed like too much.
Police and fire weren't bundled together
Fire and police weren't bundled together
Bifurcate police and fire, if the city hadn’t already spent significant money in the last few years
Data about deficit in current service related to building and projected needs
The needs were done separately and one at a time. This is the model that worked with our schools
I may have voted for the Mahoney project as it addressed all buildings in need of replacement.
Property taxes had not increased so much last year
Input from citizens was made before purchase of property
You’d separated fire from police
Reprioritize the allocation of property taxes and the budget
It seems corrupt, like this is lining some developers pockets. $80M is too much even though I voted
The impact on property taxes weren’t so high and the cost overall was lower.
More info
Eliminate architects; use modular components; this is not the time for an architectural statement.
The cost was much much less. Less tax impact!
Do we specifically need a custom designed building? Why not use a standard plan?
Mahoney should come first

Q5 Any other comments or suggestions about the public safety buildings or what the City should do next?

(330 responses)

Individual Responses | AI-Generated Comment Summary

Sell the Walgreens building
I feel like the location of the buildings could have been best be used as housing.
Share the repairs that are truly necessary along with the cost to perform that work.
Two separate bond questions; drastically scale back the police station plan; get partial federal funding (Collins brags about getting towns new fire stations; where's ours?)
The City needs to improve existing buildings before building new buildings. We still have two vacant schools. If you are not going to reuse buildings in a timely manner sell the properties off to offset the cost of the expensive projects you do want to do.
This is the first time I have EVER voted against a municipal bond in my life and I am 52 years old. South Portland City Council is spend, spend, spend. This is a meaningful issue, but the tax increases in the past few years are substantial. We have a Mall with parking lots that are never full. Let's get to developing on the West side and sell a building or two if necessary on the East side. Take a year or two break and do a full Financial audit of the city, you have lost the trust..... clearly from this vote.
This is not the right time to be spending millions and millions of dollars while the average person in South Portland suffers and struggles to pay their taxes and put food on the table. Not everybody is rich
I hope the city stops with these foolish proposals. There are tons of ways to cover the annual cost to this without burdening taxpayers. And also, actually provide what the renovation would cost. Being vague just makes it seem like you are hiding something
Stop wasting tax payer money for "top of the line" when we can fix what we have and not cause our city taxes to increase at such an alarming rate for years. Live within your means, stop moving the goal line!
Do a long range assessment of capital needs for city facilities and share with the public

It was probably bad timing to ask for this spend now. Hopefully costs don't increase too dramatically when this goes to a vote again.

If it's possible to do one building at a time, you could choose the one that needs replacement most, and try to get that done first.

I don't pay property taxes and understand it is a crucial issue for some.

The price is absolutely insane. Work with what you have. Sell the other properties and use that money for repairs.

There was a lot of the community not happy about the coat and process. With information I saw, I felt the city staff and council did not hear those thoughts and concerns, because there did not appear to be an exploration to adjust the plans and/or scope. It is the job of the council to represent everyone, not just their interests.

I like the site of the proposed new police station.

End all forms of welfare for aliens !

Reduce expenses in the City

i was disappointed in the outcome. Our police, fire and support functions are operating in facilities that were designed for a different era. The demands on public safety have changed dramatically. Today's departments require modern emergency communications, secure evidence storage, training space, technology infrastructure, resiliency during disasters, accommodations for a diverse workforce, and facilities that support recruitment and retention. Just as important, these projects are fiscally responsible. Delaying action typically means higher construction costs, continued spending on aging infrastructure, and missed opportunities to solve operational issues comprehensively. Every year we wait, costs increase and the facility continues to age. The question is not whether we invest, but whether we invest wisely and before those costs become even greater.

Cut the budget and stop making property owners foot the bill. Why not sell Mahoney and use that money to fix or replace the public safety buildings?

Find a cheaper fix do one project first then the other later.

We need the buildings. Focus on one building, cutting costs while not giving up quality.

Solicit South Portland residents who would be willing to pledge to personally finance the project, via 170(c)(1) tax-deductible donations. The City needs this. Surely some of us believe it would be a worthy cause. Reducing the price tag by any amount could move the needle in the right direction. Police and Fire are essential services. The 37% who voted in favor should be given an opportunity to follow through.

Pick one to start, dramatically decrease the building price, control other property tax increases to make margin for the new buildings.

I struggle with the mindset of City leadership who are unconcerned with the persistent and rapid increase in the cost of living in South Portland. Taxes that increase faster than inflation and my income is a problem. I hope that City leadership will start to pay attention now that a few bond votes have not received support from taxpayers.

Keep up with regular maintenance, have a budget line for maintenance in the budget.

Put in a dry basement system in, add a ceiling and walls to the area where contaminated clothes can be contained, expand the kitchen and a bathroom into empty bedrooms as the blueprints call for in the 1990's and call it a day. Central fire is 2 miles from Cash Corner the bigger trucks can come from Cash Corner for this side of the city in case of fire and save the taxpayers gobs of money. Build the new police dept and sell the current police dept building to use the cash for future maintenance costs on city buildings.

I like the two station plan. Look for reductions that might enable future expansions

Taxes in this time are crushing us and many of us struggle to pay them.

Police need new, renovate for Fire as needed!

Sell the former Walgreens property and Mahoney and let developers build things that will generate tax revenue

Maybe voters will agree with the city council more if they didn't overreach with ordinances, push political agendas, sky high property taxes, no transparency on prior investments like the solar field...Thank good ness they didnt move forward with pay to throw. Our taxes are so high yet we can't run a school budget without laying off teachers every year.

The city needs to focus on business at hand and it needs to stop asking for money via taxes as a first option. Focusing on alternatives to constant tax increases would be a a good start.

RETURN to theoriginal proposal with City Hall & Library in the Mahoney Building, and the Police Station on the Former Mahoney athletic field. Then rebuild Central Fire in its current land as well as on the land occupied by the current police station. Lastly, SELL the Walgreens property. This was likely the last straw: paying for new land when a far better location was already owned,

We dont need 2 fire stations in Cash Corner. what a waste of $$$ for Walgreens site. Fix the building that's impacted the worst NOW - why did city wait so long to let us go see for ourselves- Want to see a DetailedLine Item for each one before I vote-just dont sneak around and find some way to railroad it through

The whole thing just feels very tone deaf. There have been substantial property tax increases over the last few years, and asking for $150 million (including interest) for what seem like shiny new buildings and no tangible increase to public safety just does not seem prudent. You also can't ask for $150 million and then say if we don't do this it will cost a lot to fix the problems in the existing buildings without providing details. $150 million is a lot! I get that fixes to the existing buildings may not buy us decades more of use, but there was no clear comparison of alternate financial options. It was also unclear what the impact to closing the Central Fire Station during construction would mean for actual public safety during construction.

I voted in favor of the project but it is clear the majority felt otherwise. You need to be able to reduce property taxes to get municipal projects/bonds approved in the future. This means expanding commercial and residential inventory/occupancy. South Portland should be generating more commercial tax revenue by creating policies that attract businesses. In addition, keep supporting new housing inventory for both multifamily units/low income, entry level homes, and encourage higher priced development projects. If you want to spend a lot of money, you need rich people living in your town.

Stop overspending. Be realistic about costs and what upgrades are really needed. Use existing buildings as much as possible. Sell Mahoney. Put limits on school budgets. Be realistic about what is required and what would be “nice to have”.

The police should use Kaler school as their station

I voted yes to show support knowing that it would be voted down because of cost. Please go back to the drawing board to reduce the costs. Cape E new fire station was $20 mill - can we go with their plans? With the lack of funds and financial cuts at the schools, recent increased property taxes and now extreme high heating and gas prices people in our town do not want and cannot afford another hundred (s) of $ on there tax bill. We want $ to be fiscally responsible and help all people.

I’m a reasonably informed voter, but simply wasn’t convinced that this is the best pathway forward. I think the city needs a loud and proud campaign if they want something like this to pass.

The city is bleeding money and is poorly managed. If you want to raise funds for this, add more traffic enforcement officers and actually issue tickets. If you had someone posted on Highland Ave everyday and issued speeding tickets along with actually issuing tickets for running red lights, you'd be able to fund a proper police department and fill and budgetary gaps for the city. The traffic enforcement statewide is an absolute joke.

It would have been nice to understand the costs associated with not replacing the buildings. What is the estimated annual cost of future repairs to the existing public safety buildings and what is the associated tax burden?

Central probably needs replacement. I visited the buildings. Should have done bonds separately. Should not have bought Walgreen's without asking voters & before bond vote. You are fixing pump station & bridge & it's too many projects for people to absorb in this very difficult economy. We can't heat our homes or buy food or medications. Can Kaler be repurposed for City Administration and sell Mahoney? You really need to do better with planning. I voted for the bond but understand why people didn't.

So far the city has considered how to make the police station more welcoming to community members. Instead we should critically and creatively consider what public safety should look like in our city before we spend millions on a 50-year police station. We should consider what basics our police station legally needs rather than automatically including what is now “standard” in “modern policing.” Can behavioral health, animal control, community training rooms, municipal fitness rooms, etc. be reoriented to exist outside the walls of a police station to better serve our community? Could some rooms serve multiple purposes?

Let’s build and maintain public buildings in a manner such to ensure long and productive lives.

The buildings aren’t old. They were not taken care of. Poor money management. It was disturbing that wallgreens was purchased without citizens voting. I don’t trust the way our tax money is spent. I think it is messed up that the city

manager drives a SoPo work vehicle to and from their home in gray/ NG. We need SoPo residents making the decisions for our town.

Scale down costs. Do not demolish fire station-possibly repurpose it. Sell Mahoney for senior housing -forget about city center at Mahoney. Keep and update library-it is a beautiful library.

Find ways to reduce the cost by trimming some aspects of the buildings and look very strongly at sharing some facility needs (such as those for training purposes) that can be shared with current city facilities or with neighboring municipalities.

Try to utilize existing buildings as well as completing maintenance as necessary. Continue to keep in mind the tax burden of new builds for the citizenry

Bad timing for this vote. People can’t afford fuel and groceries.

Are there grants available to help cover the cost?

Thank you

In the future separate these different projects. One for fire and one for police instead of bundling them. Make them smaller in scope. Or create them with minimal requirements and then work on optional upgrades later on. We keep getting hit with higher tax bills and people can't afford to stay in their homes. Also we need to change tax laws to tax hotels and industrial land users to increase tax revenues and reduce the burden on residential homeowners.

Maybe sell some of the unused property you own to help fund this. This city has grown out of control with its spending and the taxes are insane.

Fix and maintain your house on your current income just like the rest of us have to.

Deferred maintenance never makes sense

I supported. But a large ask.in this tight economy. Maybe a phased approach would be more acceptable to citizens.

Sell Walgreens, Mahoney and Kaler!

More transparent process. Develop phased projects; find additional sources of funded (tif?). You knew you were asking for a totally unreasonable amount of money and you hadn't planned for this long recognized need. Shame on you! And you thought you could slip it past the voters without a rigorous process. You're chicken to raise taxes but you'll slip in bond issues and fees as if it's not the same think. I totally respect and support the police and fire personnel but you obviously don't or you wouldn't be jockeying them around.

Prematurely buying the land for the future police station when no project had been approved was a poor use of city funds and now the site just sits vacant while that $2.5 million can't be utilized towards renovations. Proposing two separate new buildings on separate sites does not reflect the financial climate that we're living in. While understanding that the need exists for new and/or renovated spaces, the bond should have been broken up into separate projects, or given a series of options like the High School turf bond question did. I think limiting the scope to one new construction building and one renovation would also give the appearance of being more responsible with the city's money.

I wholly appreciate that delaying planning and construction will inevitably increase the costs (part of my motivation for voting in support of the bond). I think there's an unwillingness to make truly hard decisions. For example, rather than a PPP for Mahoney, what if we sold the property to a mixed used residential developer and use the revenue to offset expenses for new police and fire stations. Consolidating city services is a nice to have not a have to have. Alternatively, could you sell off multiple municipal properties and add a more efficient city hall to the back of the fire station?

Sick of the government taking my money

How about a task force—as opposed to a committee—that begins with a budget approved by residents and taxpayers; one that independently explores options, engages stakeholders, and thinks outside the box?

Put together a multidisciplinary committee to spend time and come up with different options. Committee to engage with community for feedback. Find federal and state funding sources to offset cost. Consider more economic development with TIF options, parking garages, tourism increase, deeper partnership with the airport for funding. Consider reducing school budget as it makes up 66% of the property taxes. Build in a cap not to exceed 50% of total budget for school funding.

I wanted to support our public safety and understand the need for updates. I’m hoping the city will come back with a more reasonable plan.

No

Provide more education to the community

I think in addition to the tours, videos would have been very helpful to show people the conditions, along with testimonials from staff about the challenges they face in the existing structures and how those challenges affect residents (like, we're unable to handle more than X # of calls because our phone lines or garage bays or whatever). I say videos because people are lazy and definitely most won't go in person but videos would allow them to see the issues on their own time and from the comfort of their own home. I also think comparisons in capabilities to other towns could be useful.

Sell the Walgreens lot and Mahoney. We don't need taxpayers to be paying for those. Use the funds towards reasonable renovations to the current public safety buildings. Asking for this much money after our taxes just significantly increased and the inflation is out of control is tone deaf. And you wanted to charge us for trash bags on top of it!

Present more options and understand that people are really hurting right now. Why is the cost so high? Why do we have to do both? Why do we think it's OK to go into debt and raise taxes for these things but not pay our teachers more or build affordable housing? We've had 50-60 years to plan for upgrades. Why now when we face real financial limitations for the average person?

We should reconsider how we allocate funding in our city to invest more in services that actually keep us safe like education, housing, and healthcare and divest from a bloated, overfunded police force

The city needs more affordable housing more than updated public safety buildings. That's where I'd be more willing to invest in.

it was offensive when the city put out info saying the fire and police stations fell into disrepair because the previous fire and police chiefs were not facilities maintenance experts, and the city didn't have a facilities manager until recently, therefore we're supposed to just shrug it off as par for the course. It was the chiefs' job to include building maintenance and repair in their annual department budgets, and if they didn't know anything about that stuff they could've/should've asked for help. If they weren't doing that part of their job, the city manager should have made them do it, and if the city manager didn't do that the council should have made him do it. Stop making excuses for these mistakes; accept responsibility for them, and understand that is why so many people voted no. We will trust you when you earn back our trust.

I think you should do whatever you were planning on doing if the bond failed. Also understanding more specifically about why it failed outside of just the costs. It feels like since there was already a chance it could fail, i think you shpuld just execute on whatever contingency plan you already had gotten quoted.

There are much greater needs facing the city than improved police & fire stations.

We need a new plan!!!

Need more transparency on the process and see that the city is exploring other funding possibilities. The list of things that are wrong with the buildings are concerning so absolutely want to have what's required to be current with public safety standards but it's too hard for people to say yes to something that will again raise taxes so they'll be priced out of living in the city before the new buildings are even complete. Also this came on the heels of the Mahoney debacle, a terrible school budget session and those financials are a mess so it really seems as though the city needs to do some repair work on public trust so we can feel confident that they are good stewards of our tax dollars.

Until it is clear that any building replacement plan will include a credible and ongoing preventative maintenance plan, I find it irresponsible and lacking in fiscal stewardship to expect taxpayers to support the building of new public safety facilities.

I heard today that people weren't as aware of the potential bond, and that surprised me! I thought the City had a fairly big information campaign. Is there a way to obtain federal funds to help take the burden off locals? Esp with the port and the oil and the safety measure and training that goes along with it?

These buildings are in horrible shape. We will lose some of the best potential firefighters and police officers to surrounding communities with better working facilities.

Better communication about status and what is being done.

More fire! Less police!

What next??? It's always something. We can afford anymore increases. Look at how the national election just turned out. People are fed up with the increases.

Look for federal funding

The city should keep them where they are and fix absolutely essential things AND go through FD and PD budgets to find cost savings—why do we have a tricked out pickup truck for the police?! Why are there 4 cars available to attend every call?! Do we really need all the vehicles?!

Yes, sell property that we own and do not use. 4 days a week city hall is opened- less services- more money does not make for a good selling point . The highest line item is employees and we seem to add claiming new ideas need more people. Thinks outside the box as if it was your own money and house. What is wrong with you asking the same question like no mean no money....

The city should've been keeping up the maintenance on the buildings. But that is a moot point. Both buildings need to be replaced.

I know the Police Department needs an update, as soon as possible. Maybe the city should focus on that building, first and then proceed on the Fire Department at a later date. I wonder if the average resident of South portland is aware that the current building is over 50 years old and that the foundation is crumbling.

After touring both buildings, it is extremely evident that something needs to be done, but ultimately $88 million is far too much to place on the residents that are already feeling a heavy cost of living burden. Are there any federal or state funds/grants/etc that could bring that number down? What have other towns done to make this work for them in a less financially burdensome way?

Fix what we have now and stop spending money !!

Keep Central Fire where it is, with necessary upgrades. It's too bad prior councils/city manager had zero foresight and sold off the armory for a measly $700k just 10 years ago. Can they be on the hook for the millions in opportunity costs that they just threw away? Let that be a warning for when you are considering divesting of other city property. It will bite the taxpayers HARD in future years. Keep Mahoney!!!!!!!

We just got a new fire station in that area and don't need a new building. The amount for just the police station is insanely high as is and needs to come down. The city should work on paying off its current loans for school buildings, handling existing vacant buildings it needs to do something with or sell, and using excess funds from completing those things to do this. Putting it on the tax payers in this way is irresponsible.

How about a task force—as opposed to a committee—starting with a budget approved by voters and Independent from Council and staff; tasked with engaging stakeholders, researching more options, and thinking outside the box?

Keep your buildings maintained. Don't let them fall apart and then ask for new ones. The residents should have been asked if they supported the city purchasing the Walgreen's building prior to it happening.

Need to sell Walgreens property and sell Mahoney as well. Also look at getting cheaper builders. Do we really need buildings that probably cost more than the Maine Mall? The city already build one Taj Mahal fire station -- we don't need another especially since the citizens gain nothing from it.

Less than a year ago the idea was that both buildings would be part of the Mahoney Center project. But very quickly the city pivoted to the plan that was voted down largely because of the cost. Scarborough built a new central fire station and police station for $21.5 million - less than 1/4 of the price of this proposal. I would ask the city to consider cutting the bond in half - $44 million, which still seems high- and figure out how they could make it work.

It shouldn't cost $44 million to build a building. Find some new contractors who aren't trying to fleece the city.

Get creative and plan to sell off the current station property and others properties that are defunct. It's not that people are against it, it's that we are all being squeezed from every angle for money. Local, state, federal. It was presented with poor timing in the economy, especially after the school fields were approved last election. Again provide clear, honest transparent numbers along with the books to the residents to see where our money is going. If it's accurate and true, I would bet residents would be more willing to trust and understand the costs. Plus open bids for the construction state or nationwide. It would be worth a see if someone else is willing to make it happen for less.

Look at all City space , like excess school buildings, and sell them off to offset current excessive spending. And rental space like Port Harbor Marine with new corporate owner

I support the theory, but I am on a fixed income and cannot pay a substantial increase. My taxes have done only gone up and up along with the cost of living ,but unfortunately, my income has not! If the city cannot afford to buy something new, it means it needs to get creative or manage with less in the same way that we all do who are trying to figure out how to keep our heads above water.

What happened to the idea of bot at Mahoney with the library?

Concentrate on public safety without restrictions. Restrictions of the city on flock cameras, reducing need on new mainers and drug addicts, code enforcement fixing 50 Coach Road. That is not fair to other property owners on the street. Numerous requests from several property owners over 3 years transends to brokendown junk truck, broken fence, junk cars and zero resolution. We are trying to keep the neighborhood nice. You are making it less desirable by doing nothing. If it was if if was my yard, you would fine me. Why the favoritism City of South Portland? Clean it Up!

Its time to start courting Amazon. Sell Walgreens to them and let them build there. Get money back on that property, get tax REVENUE from that property and bring some great jobs to the city. Stop spending like drunken sailors and attract business

Do regular maintenance on all buildings instead of waiting until they are so bad you think they need to be replaced.

The building we have are in horrible shape but we need to make sure locals aren't being pushed out due to increased taxes. Right now with inflation, the cost it too high. Maybe we wait until the economy changes and bids for repairs/new buildings are lower. Or sell the wall greens property and use the money towards other buildings we already own.

Mahoney would Best fit as affordable or elder housing. That need is greatest. Renovate the police and fire stations. The police station should get its lower floors fixed like a dry basement. You do Not need a brand new building. That puts much too much onus on the tax payers of the town. Find someone willing to put up the money and put their name on it.

Appeal to U.S. Sen. Susan Collins to do the city a solid before she leaves office and funnel some federal money for the projects, instead focusing all her effort on the northern Maine townships that get disproportionate attention from her to pay for volunteer fire stations that are essentially fancy garages.

We should be budgeting annually for ALL replacements and upgrades. Identify future costs and include in annual budgets. If this is a crisis do a short term loan. Do not pass off the cost to future taxpayers.

I think the City should absolutely pursue a new station at the Cash Corner location. It would be great!

Should still use mahoney vs a brand new site and build,

Communicate more about the current problems with the building - don't assume everyone reads one story in the Press Herald, get cameras and tv reporters through. Run a whole campaign repeatedly telling people the poor quality that exists in the current buildings.

You are embarrassing yourselves with this survey. This is ridiculous. The people of South Portland have spoken- again and again, confirming we do not want this project to happen. Let it go. Use this energy to make our city's communities thrive and make this a city people want to live in. You're wasting time and energy on this ridiculous thing that just cannot happen.

The proposed site for a new police station is a good location.

The plans should be separate

Maybe budget for facilities management and upkeep and spend more time actually keeping what we have in good condition rather than reaching into taxpayer pockets to cover your incompetence

I would recommend the town be very straightforward to the community on how bad the buildings currently are. It was my neighbor who educated me on this topic because they actually took the time to view the buildings. As an example, emphasize that there are no women's facilities;that'll get 50% of the population more interested. Have a campaign where you show pictures and one pager with key points to create outrage regarding the current state of the facilities. However, the main obstacle is that property taxes are too high and this project is a victim of that. South Portland has to change the way residential versus commercial property taxes are calculated. We can't have residential property taxes going up because Maine mall got a tax decrease because that place is a dump and the use of that land is not fully utilized, thus under assessed. Separate residential property taxes from commercial property taxes. I don't know if that's a state thing or the city can change the assessment process

You all did an excellent job communicating and involving the public. I feel most the people that voted no were uninformed

Stop raising taxes - stop spending on new projects- use existing budget and plan accordingly

After speaking with fire personal, it is clear we need to replace or upgrade these buildings, but why did the city let these buildings get to such disrepair in the first place? These large scale projects should be planned years in advance, but aren't, why? If the city desperately needs to replace this infrastructure, make cuts elsewhere and find ways to offset these costs, like we all must do when making large purchases these days. The city must stop going to the well because it

is running dry. I hold the city manager fully responsible for this terrible mismanagement and believe it is time his position and tenure is audited and reevaluated.

South Portland needs to increase its economic development and generate new sources of city revenue.

The deferred maintenance on the current buildings is one reason people voted no. That and the timing in line with the water project.

I think if the city can find ways to chip away at any services that are duplicate, wasteful or not necessary and can find some savings residents may find supporting new buildings for the fire and police to be swallowable. Our taxes are extraordinarily high currently and have gone up so much in recent years with increasing values however our (mine anyway) incomes have not. We need to be able to afford to live here! We have ALL had to cut many things out of our budgets due to rising costs, this fiscal responsibility needs to happen within the city as well.

Why was Walgreens purchased before having approval on cost of renovations

Develop an agressive and proactive economic development strategy (and implement it) to expand the tax base and move toward long-term fiscal stability.

What happens with the building that the city bought in Cash Corner for a new police station? Will it be sold? Held on to? Where did the money come from for the purchase?

Again, back to the drawing board with designs to reduce costs.

Repair what is there

Public safety is important, and I support modernizing the buildings, but the tax increase is too high with this specific plan

Dont go crazy spending money 88 million os a crazy amount of money

This isn't just about public safety. The school board and the Council need to get serious about meeting all the community's capital needs in a way that the entire community can afford. Get to work.

Sell the unused buildings the city owns and fund the repairs to the current fire and police buildings! Many of the rank and file firemen don’t even want a fancy new building. Maybe you should not be so tone deaf!!!

Freeze spending

Stop collecting taxes from residents and spending on those who do not contribute. The funds not spent can be used to fund projects like this.

Re-think the goals of policing and shift towards community-based models. Public safety. Several towns and cities in the US have done this work. Costs are going to be high no matter what needs to be done, so why not try to get it right? There’s an opportunity to reshape and enhance the perception and impact of policing. The protect piece of protect and serve is pretty well handled. I think more energy and resources need to be applied to rethinking what service means. Especially when systemic experiences with police differ across socioeconomic and racial distinctions. There is also something particularly offputting about the longterm neglect of the women’s facilities specifically. That’s a long-term policy choice that should not be rewarded with a new building. The underlying theme of any ideas should be INVEST IN THE WEST. Until that happens, or is put in motion, support will be hard to come by in our neighborhood.

Tax bills are too high for what we're actually getting, particularly with revaluation and Mahoney coming up. So if you want Mahoney referendum to pass, stop acting like its santa claus's wishlist and get serious about explicit practicality over pie in the sky fluff.

Look into fundraising, donations, or possible grant programs to lessen the burden on residents.

Taxing the citizens of this city to death. The elderly especially. Fix these buildings before they get to a point of non repair. It’s the way of this city been going on since Brown school (don’t fix it we’ll get new) Enough, the citizens have spoken.

Cut the budgets across the board, eliminate wasteful spending, stick to a budget

Comprehensive look at all city buildings and then develop a plan to take care of them.

Reduce staffing throughout the city to cut costs but no personal cuts to the fire/police departments.

What would be the cost to converting the Mahoney building into a police station rather than building? OR converting that building into to City hall, and combined Hamlin building, and build a PS where the Hamlin building is? Sell City Hall and the Walgreens property

Maintain your buildings like the rest of us!

Be reasonable with costs, $500 increase in property taxes is not reasonable. It says something that this project was the largest bond vote in the history of Maine. There are many municipal building projects in the works with an equal lack of communication and clarity.

Kepp up with maintenence. I work in a school that is okder rhan those buidling and is in worse condition. You'll survive in what you have.

Maybe use Kaley school building for police station

Use existing buildings that you bought but are still vacant for offices and housing instead of wasting taxpayer money

The buildings are not that old. People live in houses that need repair and they fix it, they don’t move.

The City should sell Mahoney and other parcels/properties to Fund the Public Safety Buildings to reduce the Burden on Property Tax Payers.

It’s hard to reconcile to costs associated for the proposed center when Amazon just posted projected costs for a building 3x the size for 25million. I know it’s not apples to apples but…

Your consitituents are tired if higher taxes, stop spending and please, reduce our taxes, we aren't able to afford to live here much longer.

Stop driving tax paying businesses out of the city and passing the costs on the residents

The fire department has two new buildings and millions in new fire trucks, when 90% of the calls for service are rescue calls. We need more rescue vehicles and more rescue stations. Less 2 million dollar fire trucks, and less 40 million dollar fire stations. The rescue should be maned properly, in several small state of the art facilities and separate from the fire department. Fire department should have fewer buildings and fewer trucks, since when ever there is a fire, mutual Ade agreements sends a dozen area fire departments to the fire. With all the fire prevention regulations, we have fewer and fewer fires. There are way to many fire trucks and fire stations in Cumberland County !

This city needs to work with their existing budgets. They need to make cuts in plan for the future Without looking to taxpayers to fund this by increasing taxes. If the buildings need repair, then other things in the budget need to be deferred, reduced or eliminated.

My biggest concern about the plan was destroying the old fire station. I travel extensively and appreciate how other countries preserve historic buildings. Central Station is a beautiful landmark building as us the armory next door. Please try to preserve it by incorporating it in a new design or repurpose it.

I also was thinking about the Mahoney project is in the future. We are close to be priced out of the city we love and have lived in all our lives.

The costs of these projects was simply unaffordable to the citizens. We defer maintaining our buildings costs us in the long run. Invest real upgrades into our current buildings. We can’t be looking to build new buildings that contain everything we could ever possibly dream up. The citizens and the city need to live within their means.

We have got to look at the rising costs to citizens. Increases in the past 5 years have outpaced increases in salaries. Add to that mix the inflation and the cost of fuel, especially heating oil.

I don’t want to lose our public servants to other municipalities because the working conditions are more up-to-date elsewhere. That being said, the increased tax burden for many of our SoPo neighbors was obviously not desirable/manageable. I hope we can still give our first responders what they need for work spaces, make the buildings up to code, ADA accessible, etc. while also looking for ways to reduce the overall cost of the projects.

Pursue additional funding to reduce cost

Repair what we have. We don’t need new buildings. If new were built they should be essentials only. Look at the Cash Corner station, 3 people work out of that massive building and it has a restaurant grade kitchen. That one should have been renovated also

Fire the city manager and assistant city manager and bring in financially conservative leaders.

stop growing taxes at a 10-15% cagr

Stop raising taxes ! Sell the building we are not using and fire !! Yes FIRE anyone involved in financial accounting in this city.

Reduce needs. You don’t need all that. Share common areas. One breakroom. One training room/conf room. Shared sleep rooms. Reduce offices not everyone needs one. Remove sally port and holding. Jail is right there and they would go there anyways. With all the ice stuff I also want to see all police vehicles’ logos and not just officer cruisers. You can’t tell me all of those are undercover and exempt. All those take-homes and zero have logos except the k9s. Everything should have a logo. If you want to build new them Look at scarboroughs and do a joint on the existing property. Fire said in a meeting they could go to cash and pd could go to Walgreens or Mahoney. Get a price to show us fixing stuff to code. If it truly is $40 mil that’s half of what you proposed which is a better sell. But I don’t think it’s that high. Fix the necessary safety stuff and water issue. That’s all they need.

Prioritize public safety and facilities maintenance. No new deferred maintenance. No school administration creep, schools focused on reading, math, and life skills. No fluff, feel good programs until scores come up.

We need to get more businesses in town that will help reduce property taxes. Otherwise people won’t support things like this that will increase their taxes this much.

proofread and more comprehensive communication

Budget for and Maintain current properties.

There needs to be some compromise in the new buildings, not everything needs to be state of the art. With rising costs, people are barely getting by and can’t support significant tax increases. Look into grant funding opportunities.

Stop using resources to force something the people don't want at this time.

Challenge a fresh set of architects, preferably ones with a record of inventive, imaginative, resourceful, stingy problem solving.

I understand the need, but the city needs to budget better. Not sure what you did with all the boost in property taxes you just got, so maybe look there first

I am in full support of these buildings but the way it was presented was not fair to the tax payers. My current taxes have increased 40% in three years, my life in South Portland has not improved that much. I am a business owner and happy to learn more and share ideas and make this presentable to the tax payers for a successful vote.

It doesn't seem like you are stewarding the resources that we're currently giving you, so why would I agree to give you more money?

Not surprised 63% voted against it. Property taxes are just too high; unfortunately, townships can't do much about that. Apparently, it requires action from the state and possibly a constitutional amendment.

Every year we get hit with a new increase or bond etc. what’s the long term plan. Is this going to go one every year in perpetuity? Please articulate a long term vision for maintaining property taxes where they are or reducing them. Then it’s easier to consider large new bonds.

I'm sorry but there's no way it cost 88MILLION !!!!! This is just pure greed at this point. I understand that things are more expensive but this is just absolutely ridiculous.

These upgrades and spending should be presented as part of a comprehensive capital improvement plan that considers the timing and strategy to address the city’s overall needs. Specific to the public safety buildings, there should be more scrutiny of wants vs. needs. Similar to the athletic field upgrades decided on recently, I believe there may be less costly options that meet the needs.

Make traffic patterns safer in Cash Corner. Slow down the traffic in neighborhoods. Maybe when the police are attentive to existing issues will I see justified reason to implement a new and improved building. But a new building won’t fix the lack of attention to these issues... speed, traffic patterns, cell phone use, distracted driving, overall ignorance of citizens on the roads!

The focus should be on South Portland's growing and changing population, and how that should change police and fire services.

With financial concerns and considerations for schools, having to fund another big expense was too much. I also worried about the effect that passing this big cost could have on the vote for the school budget. If people are asked to increase their taxes for this, they might be unwilling to make big changes for schools, where there are some coming potential increased costs.

I believe there should be ZERO increase in taxes. The city, including the school department, should reduce their spending to allow this to be tax neutral.

Fix the existing buildings so they 'make do.' That is what homeowners are doing: we cannot afford repairs to our own homes due to property taxes, thus why should we support the latests and greatest improvements to public buildings? FIND A WAY TO LOWER PROPERTY TAXES; start by eliminating the position of sustainability director as that work can be done by a citizens group.

We need to come together with the many building professionals in our city and find solutions to bring the existing buildings to new life. I completely support our fire and police professionals. They deserve better work environments.

Keep transparent, one step at a time, continue to ask for community feedback.

If the buildings were being maintained properly, then we shouldn’t need new buildings just like our schools. Take care of what we have!! Our taxes are high enough!

We less and pay more. Keep to your budget

Sell Mahoney, Kaler & the Former Walgreens, pay down existing debt. Tighten the city’s belt, like residents have to, pay the debt down more, then let’s talk about fire & police stations. Taxpayers need relief more runaway spending.

Someone needs to be paying more attention to the upkeep.

Use the money from the sales of unused properties to fix the existing buildings. Your office needs a forensic audit. We’re being taxed out of our homes.

Make it easy for people to understand where the need is. Going to meetings isn't easy for people who don't have time and can't prioritize it. Be clear in needs, where things are lacking and don't make it seem like we either support our services or don't. People will always put their immediate needs first - groceries, gas, cost of living - so these will always be secondary at a time when people are stressed, hungry and broke and our schools are failing. Not to be negative, but unless it's clear to everyone why it can't continue and is unsafe - it's not a good time for renovations. (And, to be clear, I was on the fence. But I also need to buy groceries and support my family's health needs.)

Stop increasing taxes

What would happen to the existing fire stations and police station? Why didn’t you keep the existing buildings in good shape? Why does the 5 year old Cash Corner fire station need replacement already? The location is basically the same, so why move it? Why wasn’t this considered 5 years ago before that project?

Find a donor to fund it

We need a new police station but not a new fire station.

The City should maintain and budget for upgrades, maintenance and improvements to all buildings in their annual budgets. A building in disrepair is only put on display in this city when the city wants to spend outrageous amounts of money to replace it. Why arent floors replaced when floor tiles come up? Why arent ceiling tiles replaced because of a leak? Lots of homeowners in this city would probably love to have their homes torn down and replaced but its not practical! You maintain and improve what you have and budget for an expansion. This city is asking taxpayers for a crazy amount of money for 2 buildings and then what? How are they going to be maintained?!

Your poor past financial decisions lead to this current situation. You need to do better representing your constituents. I appreciate the hard work involved, but please be more financially responsible.

This and Mahoney project highlights the ineptitude of current city council

Take care of the building that they have. They should have done required routine maintenance over the years instead of allowing the building to get in such disrepair. Also, sell the Walgreens building and add that money to their budget. They got the cart before the horse on this one, they should have voted whether or not we need a new building before they bought Walgreens. Message to city council: thank before you act. Now we have a building and a lot at Cash Corners that we no longer need. Not good.

City also needs to maintain what they have. Could we possibly sell other unused buildings to defray the cost?

I know these buildings are in need, but at this time I can't afford the increase to my tax bill

The city should actually start listening.. absolutely tone deaf

So that building at Cash Conner and use that money and sell Mahoney and Kayla's School you'll have a bundle of money then

Maybe sell Mahoney to finance this. Property taxes are already too high.

I have been in South Portland for 37 years. When we were voting on Renovations for at the high school I didn't realize how luxurious some of it was and thinking that did we really need all of that. Of course removal of asbestos and important structural things but it seems like there's no transparency about all of how the money is going to be spent and if there were any items that we could eliminate to reduce the cost. I still am perplexed that you buy a building and the space for how many millions and then you just scrape it and none of it is usable. I'm a practical person but my taxes keep on going up significantly and I have no say about it. Thank you for listening

No higher taxes

I thought the point of buying the old Walgreens on Cash Corner was going to be the new police station. Why ask for $88 million for a new building? Last year our taxes went up because of the high school football field. The year before they went up from a new assessment. The city is bleeding us dry! As a veteran that was born and raised in Maine, I am so disappointed I decided to retire home to only have my retirement check stolen due to property taxes. I just can't relay how disappointing this all is, it feels like the city just takes and takes and takes and there's no relief. I'm not made of money.

Bring in experienced business development consultants, who can help the city capitalize on its location and opportunities — ask why Scarborough gets more economic development than South Portland. Ask why there isn't a single hotel development across the bridge from Portland commercial district. Ask why the city seems to think that it's principal function is to build gold plated versions of everything understanding that the tax burden is paid principally by individuals and families who can't afford more tax increases.

Our taxes are obscene. we are going to be hard pressed to vote for anything till that chanves

Property tax levels are out of hand I have been here thirty years and have had a 300% in crease in my taxes and have watches services and other items decline.

Sell some vacate buildings to pay down the det

Listen to the public, Real leadership would never have let this go to the public, and the voters made that clear. Constant large tax increases are too much. No more blank checks are being given at the voting booth for bond issues. Instead, there would have been a financial plan that would have coordinanted projects to align with debt being retired and the creation of new commercial development. Bring the voters a few years of tax increases that don't exceed COLA. Will it be painful, yes, but the COVID expansions have to be pulled back. A sustainability staff member, not a department of many. There's plenty of room for reductions that will keep taxes in line.

slow spending.

Provide data on fire calls vs ambulance calls from central station. How much longer to service east of city with cash corner station

Please save the Central Fire building as it should be a historical building. Fix it up to be as beautiful as it was when it was built. The rest could be torn down but the historic beautiful part should be left there.

Do one at a time

Don't spend 2.5 million on Walgreens without letting anyone know or vote before hand, seemed sneaky.

People are struggling to keep up with inflation so it's hardly surprising. Necessities are breaking people's bank accounts. South Portland keeps trying to burden the taxpayers with these big "necessary" projects and it's too much. They also turn around and try to squeeze every nickel and dime out of us with pay per bag trash, banning gas mowers, etc. People are working multiple jobs just to live in this city now and barely getting by. Better long term planning on the city's part could have prevented this! I've lived here for more than 20 years and it's always wait until the absolute last minute to propose a big project. When the situation is so dire that the project must happen or it's the worst case scenario. The high school comes to mind. Years of knowing it wasn't compliant and then forcing taxpayers to vote when accreditation was threatened. Our only choice was to approve a very expensive project that should have been talked about and planned long before.

Sell Mahoney. Sell Kaler. Sell Walgreens! Stop raising taxes. Get rid of hotel supplements for those who can't afford our city. I earned my money and don't want to support others who choose not to work!

Give the residents of South Portland a break on tax increases. It's out of control

You've got other fire stations around the city. Close central and disperse everyone to the other stations. Fix up the police station.

Our taxes are already too high!!!!

The Central Station needs replacement and the spot you had chosen is still perfect. The PD can move but the firehouse location should stay.

Police station price seemed high. Really just needs a simple office building with locker room, workout facilities and storage. There are facilities such as training/meeting room at Cash Corner

These needed fixes and upgrades must be facing public safety buildings all over the nation. Advocate for assistance at the federal level. This is the kind of work I would like to see our government doing to help us and relieve us of the significant tax burden this kind of project would create.

I voted for the updates, but I was on the fence. I think it should be considered to pay for it through a tax on the rich or businesses or tourism.

I honestly support you, but have lomited income.

Cut costs. Taxes cannot keep rising as significantly as they have

Figure out other ways to lower (or at least reduce the rate of increase) of property taxes, and people will be much more willing to support our police and fire force. The property tax increases over the past couple of years have been insane, and these new buildings seem like an optional luxury. Stop taxing residents into poverty, and we'll be more willing to support these kinds of upgrades.

Get minimum upgrades, be transparent that’s what you’re doing

Reduce costs, build simpler buildings, make the costs transparent to the public through pictorial cost depictions, show the long term asset management plan to sell assets and reduce interest expense

Sell the many unused buildings we have, keep up with maintenance as needed instead of getting us into these situations, do not recommend the largest bond in state history after you have doubled taxes, look for funding outside of residential taxes

Don’t wait too long to make your decision on what comes next. Fire and Rescue along with Public Safety need new buildings. Thank you to them for all they do every day.

Separate projects and keep going.

Tax payers can not afford any more. Please maintain what we have, I pay over $500 a month. It doesn’t feel like a tax. More of a lease. Sell the assets, bank the money. Let it grow and revisit it in 5-10 years with cash on hand. Not the taxpayers cash.

AUDIT!!!! everyone should be fired. this is theft! no o es owned their home. we basically rent it.

If my house has need of repair I don't just build a new house. I keep up with the maintenance as needed.

Stop shopping at Neiman Marcus and use Target like the rest of us. A more fiscally sensible approach, like the Cash Corner Station opening in 2021 for $7.5 million (5 years ago) might have been better received.

Mahoney would be a great fit for badly needed housing You could still include some city hall services there and have room leftover for housing. City council meetings could be at SoPo HS

I think that we need to find a way to move forward with the plan anyways. We need to keep putting it on the ballot until we get a YES. Our city voted for new athletic fields but not new police and fire? it is very upsetting that this didn't pass and I think city council needs to find a way to make it happen no matter what.

Unfortunately these are economic and politically uncertain times. A delay in construction will only increase costs. I am hopeful that the hemorrhaging of taxpayer monies for war, vanity projects and concentration camps will be addressed. It is time we restart funding for health care, education, public safety (police and fire), emergency preparedness, and infrastructure etc.

lessen the combined cost of both buildings; then build both at the same time

Explore P3, the need is there and the city should not continue to band-aid these stations.

voted in favor, but let's list that mine resistant vehicle of war on Uncle Henrys. That would give a few extra bucks towards the new building.

Your questions are written in a biased way and primes us for loss. You only highlight negative consequences of one option and don’t include potential downsides of taking immediate action. It would be nice if your questions were framed

in a more neutral manner instead of trying to scare taxpayers.

Attract business to South Portland.

I think this is a learning about how measures in the past for unecessary expenses like new football fields will influence public voting on necessary improvements.

Keep up on maintenance and updates as needed.

I just think that having just disrupted the lives of so many people to prevent too much of a tax increase related to the school budget that the timing is bad.

Stop buying buildings preemptively

Why was a new building just built a couple years ago? Why was a million dollar fire truck destoryed while being played with? Why is a central station needed? WoudInt it make more sense to have multiple around the city for quicker response times? Maybe the police and fire fighters can take pay cuts to help pay for it. Would only make sense if they do not live in South Portland. Just because Scarbourgh has one does not mean you need one.

Place a site/civil water pump on site so that when there is an extreme high tide with a rainstorm the lower level will not flood.

Stress that the city needs a new Fire station but to rebuild it at that location, the police department will have to move. Stress the problems of the fire station. It can't house the newer fire trucks that the city has or will have in the future. If that fire station keeps falling apart as it is and eventually be abandoned, the east side of town will suffer from longer response times.

Renovate do real upkeep There's too much spending on things that could be cut Unnecessary departments, magazine subscription, new jobs being created, etc We have to cut back to pay your rent even if our homes are paid off and we have no kids in the expensive, poorly performing schools

The city needs to focus on regular maintenance instead of letting buildings fall into disrepair and then replacing them. Very irresponsible!

Can we get federal money? Susan Collins got a bunch for firehouses, in the past. Can we get Senator King, Rep Pingree, and Senator-elect Jackson focused on this now?

Sell the building at cash corner and put the funds toward repairs. Since you purchased it without a vote.

Educate and train police.

City Council does not have a good reputation about being competent to make improvements regarding high taxes.

Maintain the freaking buildings

Sell the school to private sale and use the proceeds to lower the bond

1. Base case analysis - Cost to repair each building to comply with commercial codes. 2. Compliance analysis - What happens if we do not make other upgrades associated with police station operating requirements? Are we subject to potential (or real) enforcement? If so, by who? 3. Zero base budget analysis - Does the City Manager and Finance Director look at non-critical programs each year and make a go/no go decision based on property tax implications? For example, how can we justify a "Sustainabilty Department" in a city our size? Frankly, it makes no sense, and it makes the average citizen think that City Hall doesn't care much about taxpayers.

Stop spending money we don't have. Stabilize the Budget. Teach kids History, Math and English.

It is insulting every time the city insist that it’s impossible to keep these buildings going. Go to Europe every single public building is hundreds of years old and survived wars. It’s gaslighting at best to argue we “need” new buildings...

Reduce overhead. No need for an efficiency department with multiple personal if they are just going to suggest bad ideas. Open the Town Hall more for services, the lines are crazy for vehicle registration now due to reduced hours

Clearly the vote plot I split indicated a mandate. I think this postmortem is a good start. Things seemed unfortunately timed with the "recent" reassessment of properties, which carries lingering angst.

I really wish the city had not closed Mahoney and built a new middle school. Why couldn't it have been upgraded and used for a school instead of building a new one? And now nobody knows what to do with Mahoney. And middle school buses pick up at 7am!

Lower property taxes

So Po typically does NOT maintain ANY city buildings. I understand new buildings are probably necessary but lets make it more reasonable for residence. You are already taxing lower income and seniors right out of this town. Maybe that's your reason for all this. Its TOO much. You need to make it more reasonable. must be cheaper pieces of land or buildings that can be used. Why not Kaler (since you closed that unnecessarily) to be the policy station? Think outside the box for a change.

I voted in support of it but I imagine people are concerned about how long and troublesome the new construction will be, in addition to the cost

Look for funding elsewhere. Start a go fund me. Ask the million and billionaires for gifts - have the buildings be named after them. Don’t defer maintenance in the future.

Sell properties that's aren't being used and use that money to fund repairs.

Much less expensive buildings. My husband just built another police station that was not nearly as costly

Give it a break. No tax increase! Sell other properties or renovate one of them. No taxes. City has been aware of all the problems for 40 years I've been a tax payer and you've done squat to keep up or fix them. We're not Scarborough stop all the tax increases

Determine actual priorities for low cost well functioning buildings. Needs and not desires. Then build a plan that is just those things

I would like to know how many city officials have the debt to income ratio they are trying to do to the city

The city needs to look at EVERY avenue to cut costs. Create citizens group to look at this. I would happily volunteer for this group. At the same time, look at new sources of revenue.

Central can relocate to Willard while the construction is done which would make the construction a lot cheaper to have a vacant building to work with

Police are well-funded. Concentrate on funding for schools, teachers, health, infrastructure. Support instead of punishment.

do Police Station first and keep cost low. Use old police station for new fire station residents.

Manage finances better did hill street need those changes

Sell the available properties such as Mahoney and Walgreens, use that money to make necessary upgrades. Apply for federal/state grants and other funding. Stop raising taxes to ridiculous amounts, you are forcing people to move out of our city. Families cannot afford to live here. Seniors on fixed incomes cannot afford to live here. Be more responsible with the money you already take in!

It is hard to increase property taxes at this time because of continuing rising costs. Try again in the future. Also, start budgeting for repairs more routinely to avoid huge sticker shock.

You really need to look deep at the proposal. Do what is needed. Think of the future but also think about the costs. Would you do this if it were your home? Increase building maintenance and do more preventative planning

SP tax payers are being asked to absorb more and more and more. It would be refreshing to have a ZERO tax increase year, or better yet and DECREASED tax year!

Two buildings with essentials and plan for future upgrades. Find a different engineering firm if needed. 100 year flood map is biting us in the backside. Planning for electric fire trucks is a waste of money today, but run conduit for future, same goes for solar. Look at a training tower on the land behind West End, TI and the mall might share some cost. Demo building behind Cash Corner for a SPFD fire museum or build storage building. Is there grant money avalible, if not, why? Thornton Heights call station land value? Plan for the School Department to use the Kayler building ‘27 or ‘28. Address the elephant in the room…spending, take home vehicles, bailing out School Department, staffing needs, Sustainability Department, implementation of usage or impact fees and general budget spending.

Don’t keep kicking the can down the road repair these buildings as they need repairs.

There has to be another solution besides increasing the taxes that are already unmanageable placing so many of us barely making it by. The city should never have bought another building without the approval of the citizens of this city who you expect to cover the cost. So many buildings sitting unused…I.e. Mahoney, Kaler.

I honestly don’t think people understand why there is a need for them. What will happen to those existing buildings? What does it have to do with the long range plan for the city?

Look into the many grants available, sell existing buildings that are not being used, stop buying Tahoes for positions that do not need them other than “that’s what the fire service does “

maintain what we have. I can barely pay my property taxes.

Sell Mahoney to a developer with a deeded requirement that it be preserved. Move City Hall into the Kaler building.

Stop spending our money.

Look at various options in priority order … more thorough communication

I would really like to have the city think about other alternatives to consolidate services and spend less money.

Many of the buildings in SoPo are less than ideal, but the police and fire buildings should not be prioritized over other needs

Bad timing - can’t afford our taxes constantly going up

Hire a planner who looks ten years down the road. And has experience with major capital expenditures and plans. Do a survey…this one does nothing for you. We voted against the bond, again.

Until ALL city spending is under control I will vote no on spending. We need department reviews on head count and spend, why are tax payers paying for department heads to drive city vehicles to and from home outside of the city. My employer doesn’t have this benefit and the city should be the same as a private employer. To many department heads, consolidation is in order. City needs to operate as a business with balanced budget and zero spending for a period until things are brought under control. Consolidation with like departments is critical at this time. Taxes are too high and keep climbing with no thought to the residents who are the ones who pay pay pay. My adult children are 6th generation South Portland residents but will NEVER be able to buy a home in the city even with wages near $80k per year as a single person, they live at home at 28 and 25 because they can’t afford rent in this city. 68% of my taxes fir the school and now you want more?? All done tapped out can’t do it!

Do the fire station. The FFs live in that building 24/7. The city does not want to be liable for the future health lawsuits tied to FFs living 24/7 in spaces where air quality has been proven unsafe and even documented by the news ALOT!

Seek grant money. Continue to educate the public about the condition of the buildings through events like the previous Building Crawl. Perhaps work toward other funding sources for SoPo such as adding a tax on hotel stays.

Use existing buildings with renovations. Sell other municipal buildings to offset the costs. You’re taxing long time residents out of the city.

Stop waisting our taxpayer's money. Stop the damn excessive spending. It is our money, not yours to spend like drunken Sailors.

Reduce costs in other areas to pay for needed repairs. Shift from Beach park ranger salaries.

Acknowledging I’m not an engineer or construction expert, the cost of the project seemed astronomical and far outstrips what SoPo citizens can afford. Our taxes are out of control as it is, and the city keeps suggesting massive projects with huge price tags. Can the existing site of the police and fire stations be expanded and subsequently renovated? As for the cost, the tax burden has been shifted onto homeowners who just want to be able to afford to keep living here. Find a way to attract more businesses and shift the tax burden onto that side of the coin. Consider ways to increase taxes on industries such as the oil companies that occupy so much of South Portland’s land, especially the valuable waterfront areas. Oil companies can afford a relatively menial increase in their taxes in order to keep operating, SoPo homeowners cannot and are being taxed out of our homes and community. Invite more public forums to discuss and problem solve

I would like to see the personnel of the departments be fairly compensated, optimally staffed and safety equipment provided. I believe the standards for employment have been lowered which acutely impacts the well being of the citizens. When the departments put in budget requests that are deemed necessary to provide services to our community and insure the well being of the citizens we also need to think about the wellbeing of our first responders and best usage of the resources already available and possibly not used due to unaddressed issues. South Portland first responders that are also members of the City’s taxpaying population may have good input into needs that have the biggest impact while also being fiscally responsible.

Can it he a 2 step approach? Focus on the new police station first and then renovate the fore station

Sell off existing vacant city properties to pay for the new Fire Station and Police Department. Do not do anything related to this that will raise our taxes. They're already too high.

We don't have a budget shortfall issue in SoPo, we have a SPENDING problem. This city must find a way to lower property taxes.

More information regarding how the current buildings restrict provision of standard services and projected future services

Seriously reconsider how business is done and listen to the community when it comes to these types of decisions. Actions towards these things should be public and transparent and so that we aren't left wondering what the true costs and intents are. Everything keeps going up in this city, consider the timing of the requests and look at how costs can be reduced and the impact on the taxpayers can be minimized. Present a solid plan to put our minds at ease about the city's ability to maintain another building so that we don't just fall into another state of disrepair - especially when many of us believe that the state of the current building could have been addressed before it got this serious had somebody been paying better attention or at the very least considering the ramifications of the lack of upkeep

Can't afford more tax increases

I think that the city needs look at a comprehensive reasonable replacement, and/or update of all the cities buildings in need of repair or replacement. The plan should include immediately selling off all of the other properties that It replaced and the projected revenue for those sales. The city either needs to work with a different architect or get more reasonable Dept needs instead of want to bring pricing down to a reasonable level that addresses all buildings in need. They're constructing brand new, high-rise buildings for less money than two city structures.

The city should implement a better plan for building maintenance, not just for public safety buildings - but for all city buildings.

Look for ways to reduce property taxes before people aren't able to keep their homes with rising cost

Has the city included normal maintenance costs for all publicly owned buildings? And if so, are we doing the maintenance which is required

Open forum for citizen input prior to spending tax dollars on property and assessment. Outrageous estimate for the replacement was overwhelming to the citizens. Crash (cash) corner is not a good spot for another station due to the already dangerous intersection. If the departments and city hall would be more inclusive with the people who live here it would help. Also took too long to block ICE from Sopo and the flock cams. Distrust in the spending of our public services decreased our understanding of why the police need a new station. Ask before spending money and we will be more open to your needs. This is a two way street bros.

Consider a sub-station for police on Main St.

We need to find a reasonable cost solution and to involve the public more in planning. Everyone I know who voted "no" was astonished by the total cost and didn't understand what it would go towards. We need more visibility and perhaps multiple options at different cost points.

Manage the money better overall.

Solicit competitive design build proposals to bring cost down, propose police first and then fire. Build more tax base and use TIF to offset cost of bonds

Public education on a major bond vote like this should be more robust

Like gotham utilize batman to fight crime idk

You should sell the Walgreen building and maintain your existing properties better. The amount of money that this city is spending is out of control lately with very questionable decisions.

Coming from a traditional Maine community, I'm uncomfortable with the premise that municipal buildings should be state-of-the-art. We all love shiny new things, but we all cannot afford them. We make do.

The city should listen to the people who voted no-the vote was for a reason. They should not have bought Walgreen's. They should have a building fund for repairs; and if they do, why has it not been used or where did the funds go? Too little too late means too much burden on tax payers. Less tax breaks to businesses, more local hotel tax, more user tax; don't tax the average citizens so much!

I think some things could be left out of new buildings such as community rooms. Theyre not the main focus of either

department. So scale back size or build outs for these

Keep the land. Make the plan for Mahoney clear. Do one building at a time.

Additional survey reports

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