



**Town Hall Meeting – Municipal Building  
June 22, 2020**

[www.leonianj.gov](http://www.leonianj.gov)

© 2020 Borough of Leonia. All Rights Reserved.



# Meeting Agenda



# Housekeeping

---

**Questions taken when presentation concludes**

**All participants are in “listen-only” mode**

**Participants will have their microphone activated when called upon**

**Thanks to all for joining us tonight!**



# Needs Analysis



# Needs Analysis Timeline



[www.leonianj.gov](http://www.leonianj.gov)

© 2020 Borough of Leonia. All Rights Reserved.



# Needs Analysis

## Key Considerations

- What facilities might need future upgrades? Does this plan help or hurt that?
- What are the highest priority needs right now?
- What's the quickest way to start/complete the project? What could prevent that?
- What's the total taxpayer impact? How can we minimize it?
- How much does it cost to do nothing? How much do other alternate plans cost?
- What are the quantifiable needs of each department (including floor plans, meeting rooms, parking, storage, etc.)?
- Can we ensure that these plans integrate with the Master Plan?
- How can we improve our overall environmental impact with new construction?



# Overview – Current Facilities



# Leonía Police Department

## Overview

- **Built:** 1920s
- **Police Moved in:** 1931
- **Last Renovation:** 1994 (relocation of holding cells)
- **Original Use:** DPW Garage
- **Size:** 2500 s.f.

## Cited Issues

“There are potential safety issues with the current facilities for all users of the building including police officers and visitors.”

- H2M Community Facilities Review

35 cited areas of non-compliance from the NJ Department of Corrections on prisoner’s cells.

- NJ DOC Cell Inspection

17 violations of the Uniform Fire Code

- Borough of Leonia Fire Inspection





# Leonia Police Department

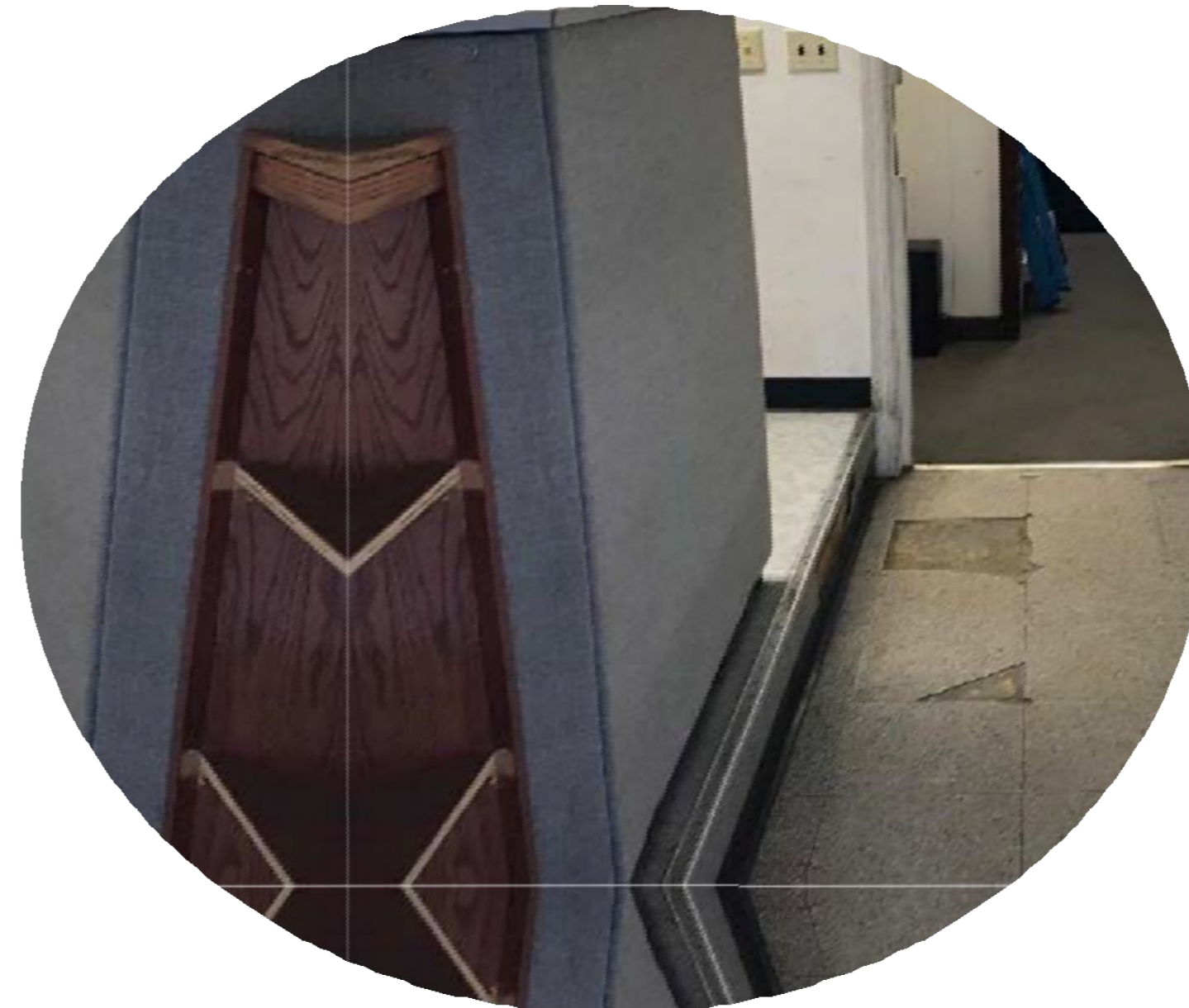
## Actual Photos

Men's Locker Room



- No showers
- Ammunition stored in same room (out of compliance)

Front Desk (Hallway)



- Too Narrow
- Not ADA compliant

Women's Locker Room



- Only accessible through men's locker room
- Too small
- Non-compliant with OSHA

# Leonía Police Department

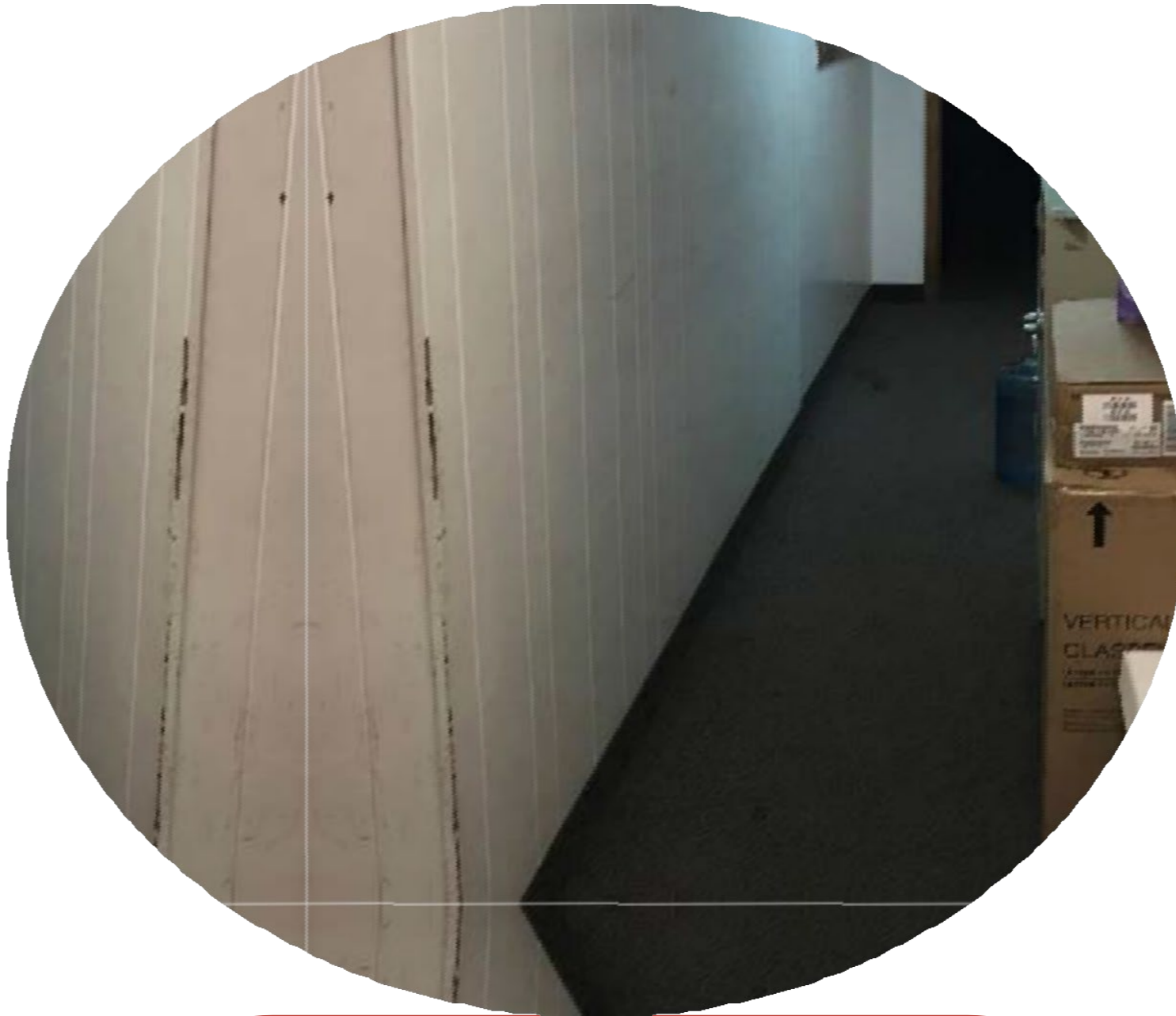
## Actual Photos

DWI Processing



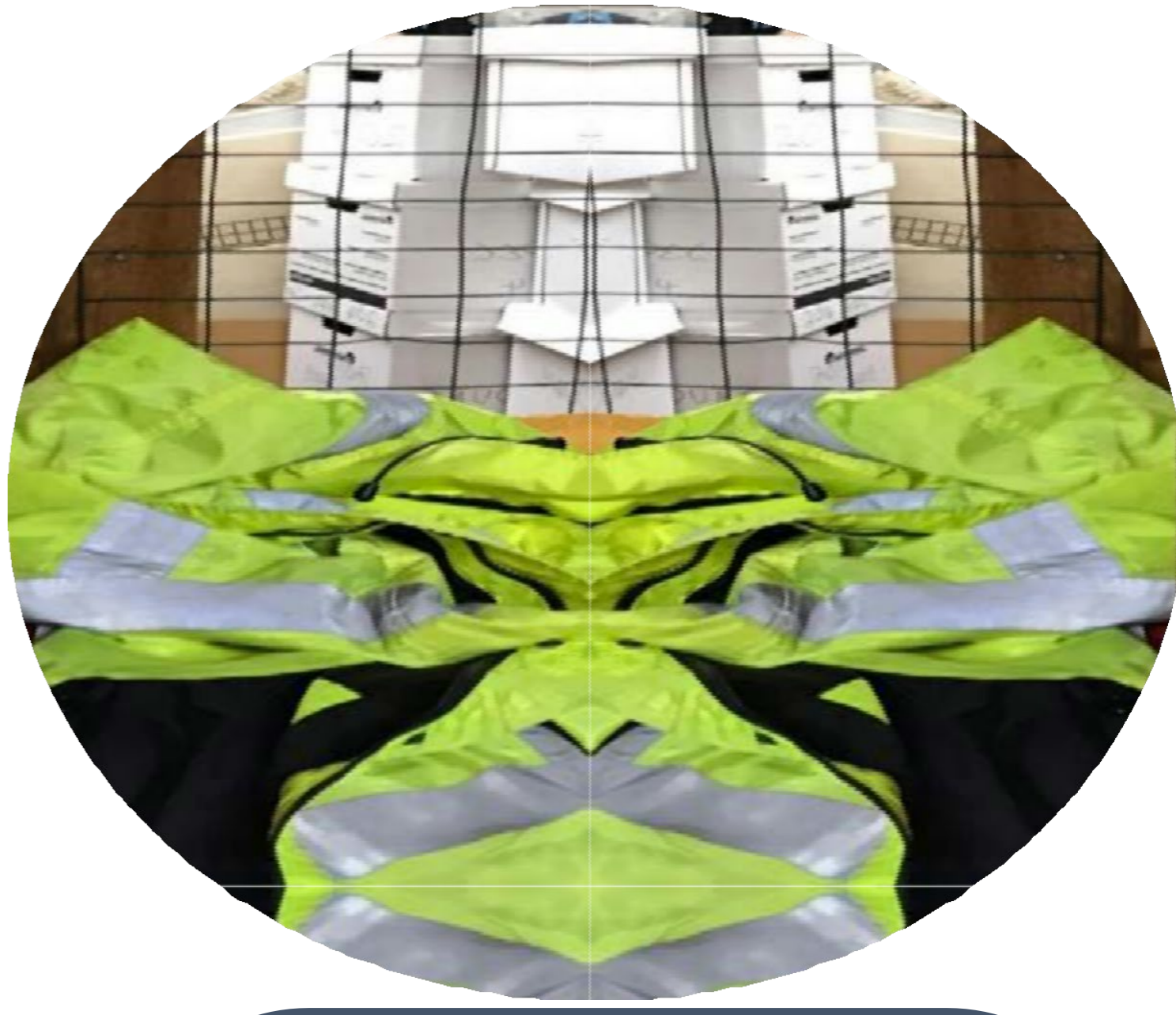
- Poor air quality results in malfunction of equipment
- Room temperature causes Alcotest malfunctions

Interior Hallway



- Storage due to lack of space
- Violates fire code
- Hallway not ADA-compliant

Attic/  
Evidence Cage



- Violates AG guidelines
- Too small
- Vendors need attic access; evidence not secure

# Borough Annex/Municipal Court

## Overview

- **Built:** 1930s
- **Last Renovation:** 2019  
(conversion to Senior Center)
- **Original Use:** Girl Scout meeting place
- **Size:** 1,204 s.f.

**Leonia's Court sessions  
now held in Fort Lee  
Cost: \$48,000/year**

## Cited Issues

**“Much like Borough Hall, the Annex is also poorly suited for current uses....In addition to being overcrowded, the building also does not have adequate ventilation or air conditioning and is in generally poor condition.”**

**H2M Community Facilities Review**

**“14 cited areas of significant security concern, including lack of almost any security screening and features.”**

**BC Sheriff's Dept. Facility Review**

**“I urge that this security issue [lack of security screening] be given your immediate attention...”**

**- Assignment Judge of Bergen County**



# Borough Hall

## Overview

- **Built:** 1911
- **Last Renovation:** 1990s  
(installation of elevator)
- **Move In:** 1953
- **Original Use:** Telephone switching station
- **Size:** 4,175 s.f.

## Cited Issues

“The building was not intended for its current use, and is outdated and inefficient.”

H2M Community Facilities Review,

“23 violations of Uniform Fire Code”

Fire Marshall Inspection,

- Environmentally unhealthy conditions (mold + asbestos) present in basement/storage/archives
- No security features, puts both sensitive information and employees at risk
- Prior repairs done without proper inspections
- Est. baseline repair cost: \$500K

# Borough Hall

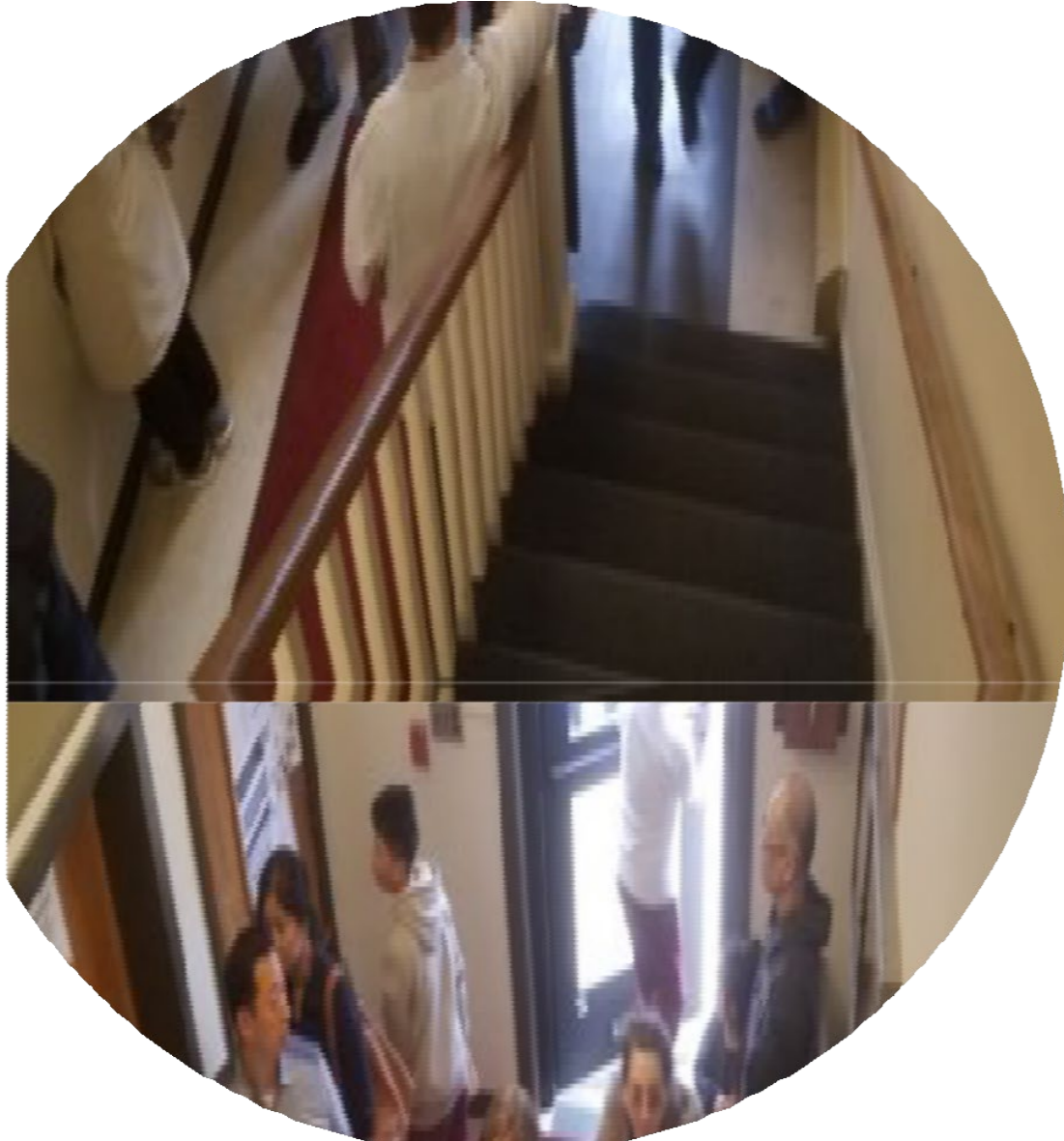
- **Before making final decision to include Borough Hall functions in the scope of the project, a cost/value analysis was completed:**
  - Analysis conducted by independent corporate financial expert (volunteered expertise at no cost to Borough)
  - Consultant analyzed cost effectiveness of moving Borough Hall functions to new building, vs. continuing use of existing building
  - Study completed comparing projected costs of additional floor in new building vs. renovating and repairing existing building
  - **Conclusion:** Renovating/maintaining existing building for 40 years will be cost-prohibitive
  - **Conclusion:** Breakeven will occur in 2040 (assuming project cost of \$10.2 million and 50-year new building lifespan)
- Full analysis is posted, in unedited form, on the Borough website



# Borough Hall

## Actual Photos

Insufficient Public Windows



- Public must visit six separate service windows
- No waiting or meeting rooms available

Crumbling building features



- Prior renovations done without permits/inspections
- Creates significant fire hazards

Vulnerable electrical systems



- Key Electrical infrastructure located on walls with significant water intrusion and damage



# Borough Hall

## Actual Photos

Insufficient Storage space



- Lack of storage space reduces office space and reduces ADA compliance in hallways, meeting rooms

Lack of meeting space



- Cannot fit all dept heads in meeting room; is also break room
- One meeting room for operations of seven departments

Deteriorating conditions



- Significant renovation required to bring building up to modern code/safety standards, ongoing damage from rain, flooding, more



# New Municipal Building Plan





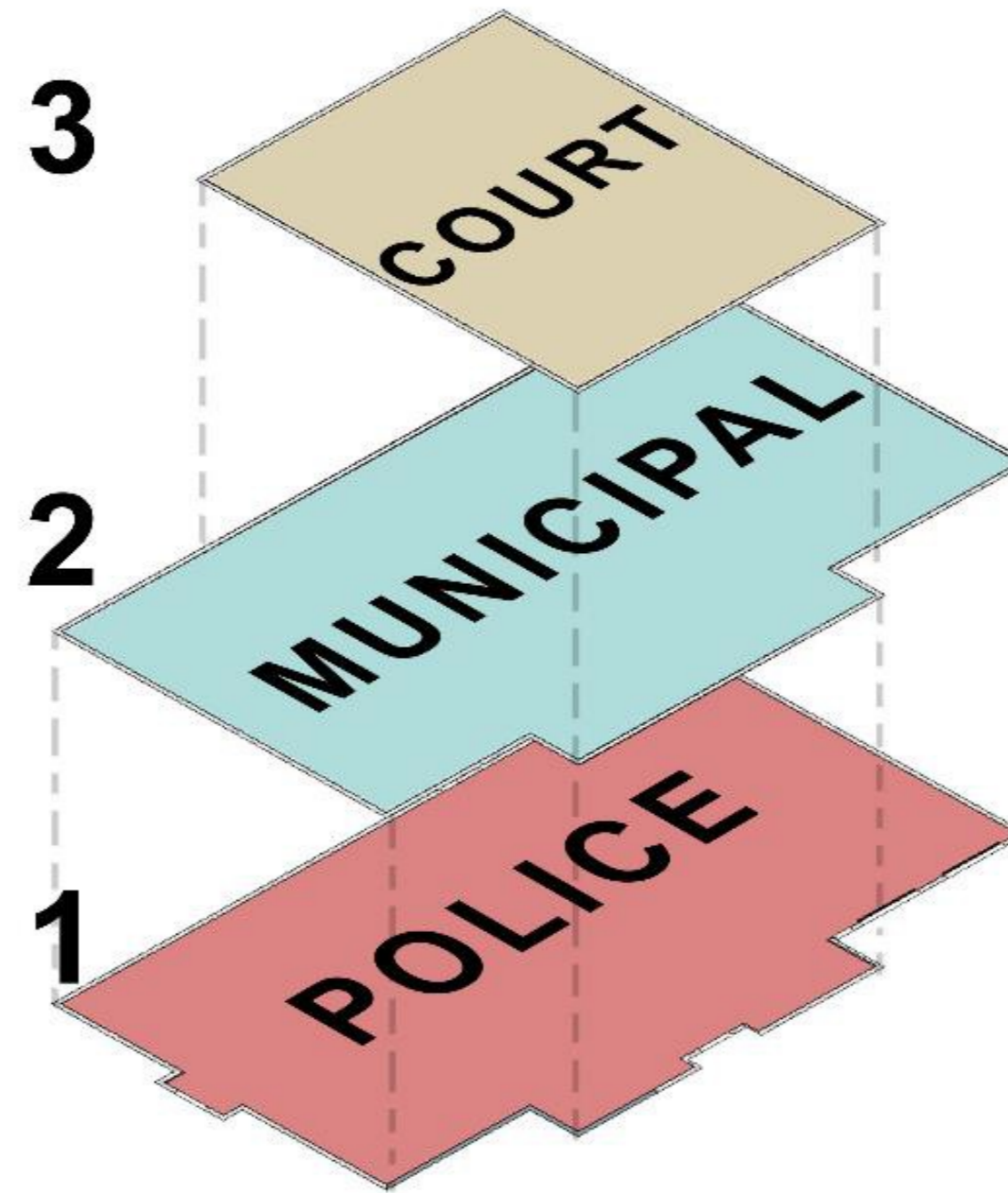
# Building Location/Overview



©2020 arcari & iovino ARCHITECTS PC



# Building Location/Overview



- 3 story building on site of existing Ambulance Corps. Building and land immediately to South
- Police Department, Municipal Court/Council Chambers & Borough Hall/Administrative Functions (~24K s.f.)

# Building Renderings (Preliminary)

View from Fort Lee Rd.

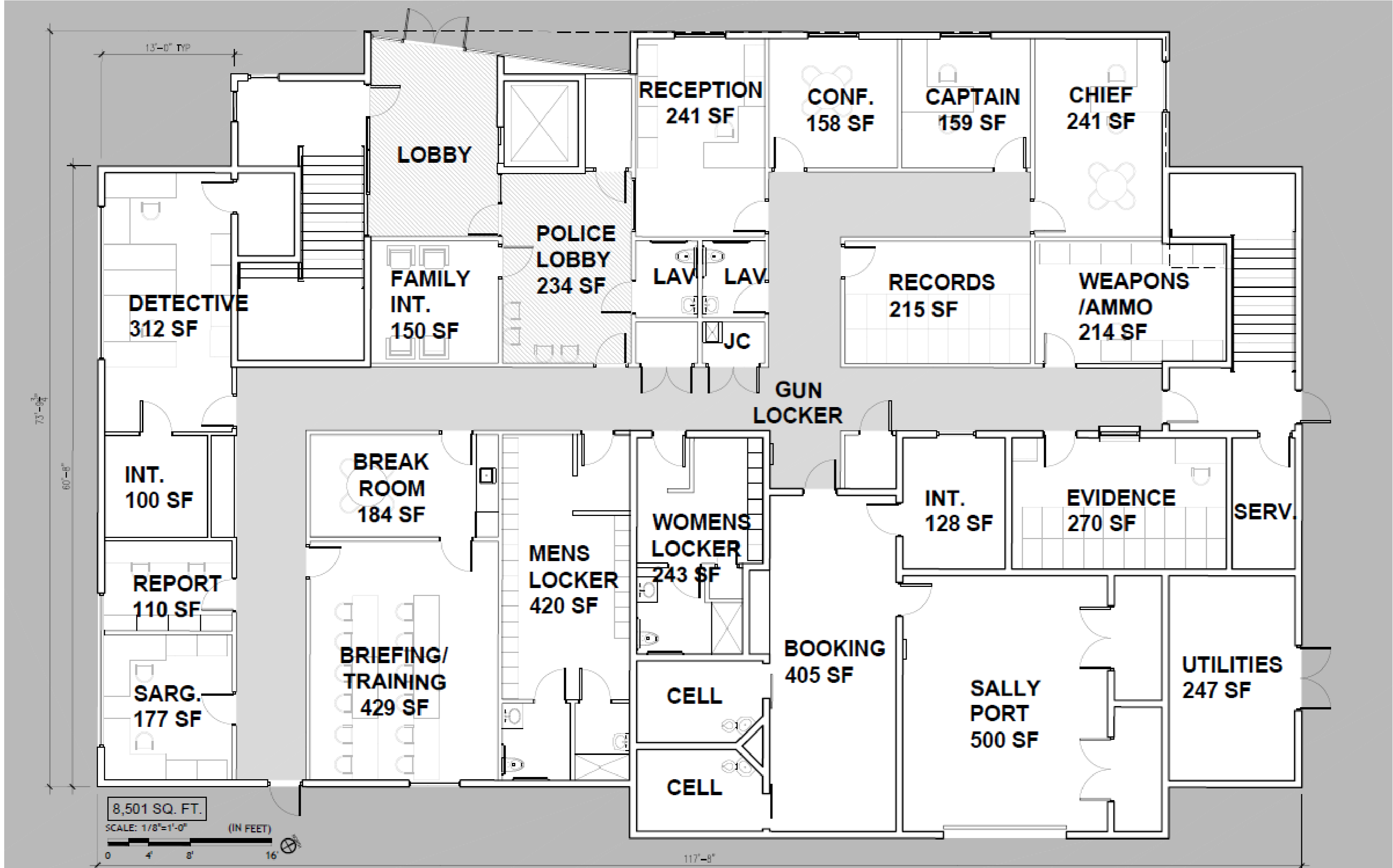
View from Library Parking Lot



# Ground Floor – Police Department

↑ Library ↑

← Fort Lee Rd. ←



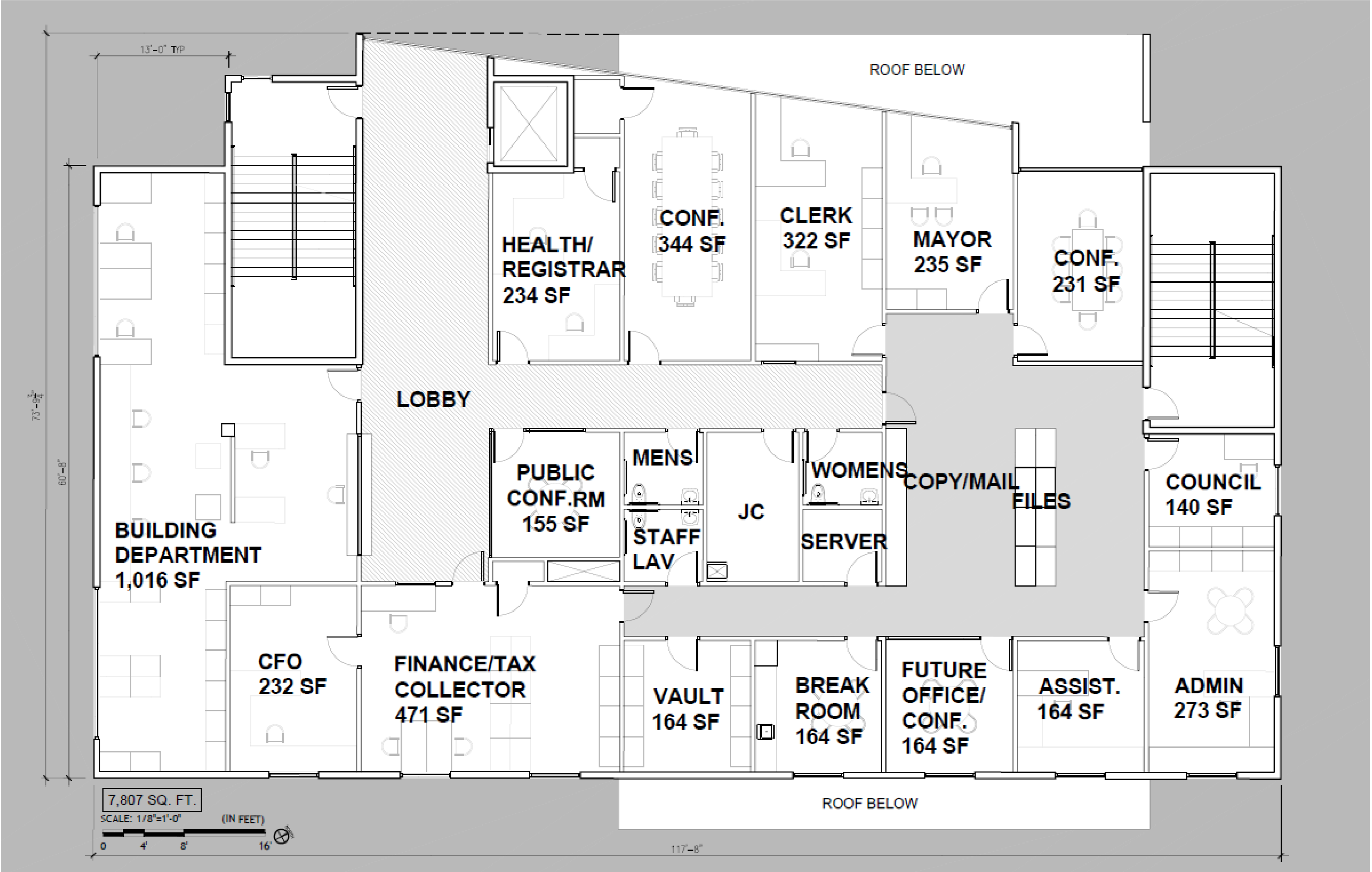
- 8,501 s.f.
- Uses: Police
- Required prisoner processing & interview areas
- True locker rooms
- Separate entrance from remainder of building



# Second Floor – Municipal Administration

↑ Library ↑

← Fort Lee Rd. ←



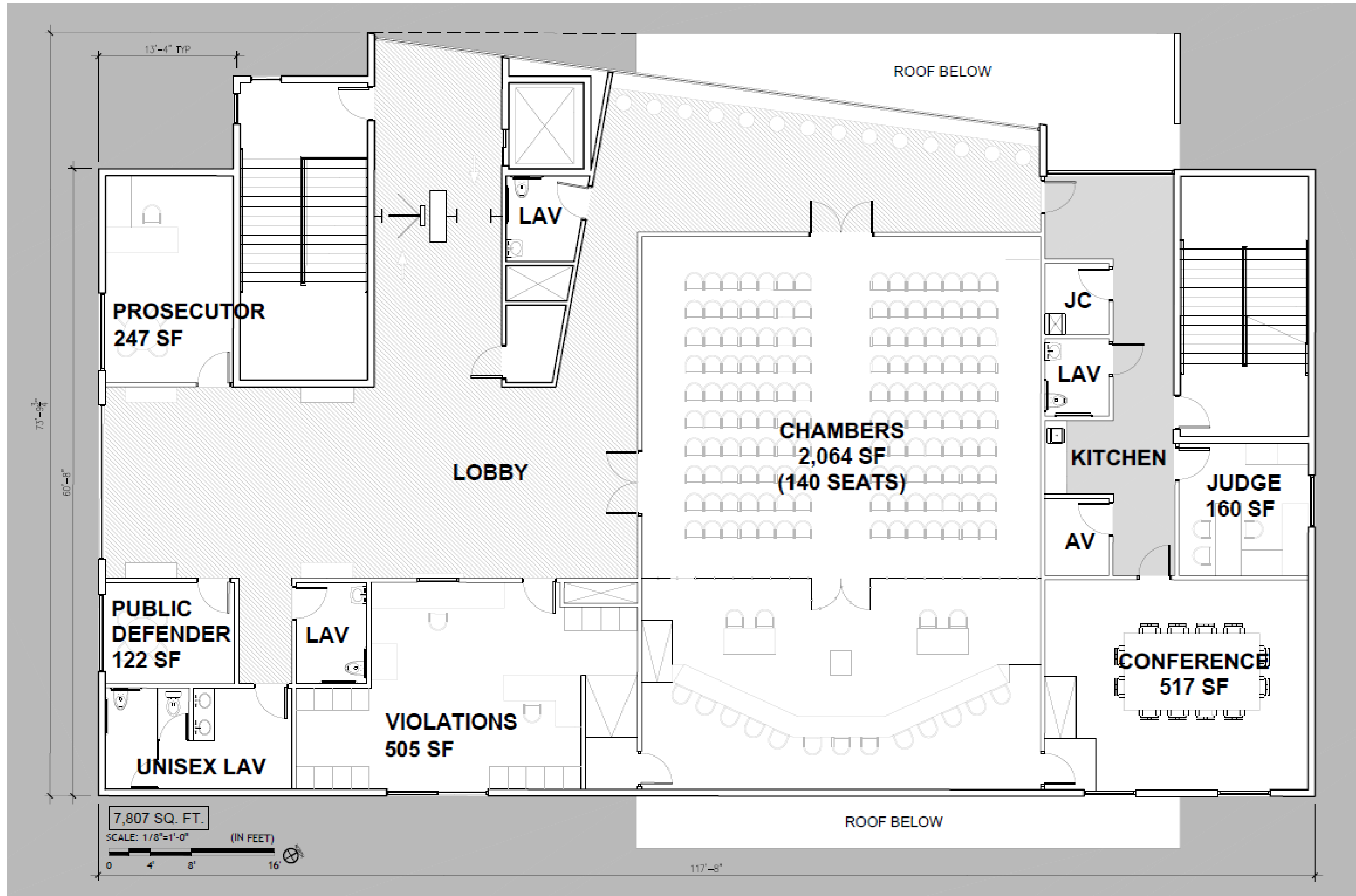
- 7,807 s.f.
- Uses: Admin., Health, Building, Finance, Clerk
- Proper space for Building Dept.
- Easier access for customers to conduct business with multiple departments



# Third Floor – Municipal Court/Meeting Chambers

↑ Library ↑

↑ Fort Lee Rd. ↑



- 7,807 s.f.
- Uses: Court, M&C, Planning Bd.
- Secure areas for court staff
- Conference room for smaller Board & Commission Meetings
- Meets all mandated court requirements



# Plan Benefits

---

- **Cited Issue Resolution** – The construction of a new building will correct approximately 100 significant safety and security violations, as identified by numerous state, county and local agencies across three different current municipal buildings/functions
- **Public Access Improvements** – The new building will streamline public access to Borough services, ensure full ADA compliance/accessibility, and provide for more public meeting space, including for committees and community groups
- **Optimized Use of Public Space** – Combining three separate buildings into one eliminates HVAC inefficiency, allows for shared human resources, improves working environment for Borough employees, and improves the future flexibility/use of the space
- **Environmental Impact Improvements** – The building will be constructed utilizing sustainable materials and technologies, allowing for lower energy costs and reducing the Borough's carbon footprint



# Plan Benefits (Continued)

- **Significant Cost Savings**
  - **Modular Construction** – Use of modular construction will reduce building cost by ~\$75/s.f.; will also reduce construction timeline by ~6 months, eliminating seasonal delays
- **Enhancements to Other Facilities**
  - **Senior Center** – The move to the new location allowed the Borough Annex on Beechwood Place to be renovated (using grant \$) to a greatly improved Senior Center
  - **Sculpture Garden** – New location allows Sculpture Garden to remain
  - **Fire Department** – Once police department building is vacated, potential to increase depth of Fire Department, and significantly renovate Fire Department building.
- **Public Safety Enhancements** – Current plan includes new access lane for emergency vehicles only, improving pedestrian safety.





# Preliminary Cost Estimate

Line Item	Current Plan Cost	Original Plan Cost	Savings vs. Original Plan
Building Construction (\$300/s.f * 24,100 gross s.f.)	\$7,230,000	\$9,435,000	(\$2,205,000)
Property Acquisition	\$1,210,000	\$0	\$1,210,000
Demolition and site preparation	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0
Furnishings and technology	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0
Soft costs (engineering, architectural, project management)	\$750,000	\$750,000	\$0
<b>Total Budgeted Building Cost (estimate, subject to change)</b>	<b>\$9,940,000</b>	<b>\$10,935,000</b>	<b>(\$995,000)</b>
Road/parking improvements (new emergency vehicle access)	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0
<b>Total Budgeted Project Cost (estimate, subject to change)</b>	<b>\$10,190,000</b>	<b>\$11,185,000</b>	<b>(\$995,000)</b>
Additional grants, donations, sponsorships/naming rights	(TBD)	(TBD)	(TBD)
Potential sale of Borough Hall, new ratables, use of vacated PD space	(TBD)	(TBD)	(TBD)



# Property Acquisition

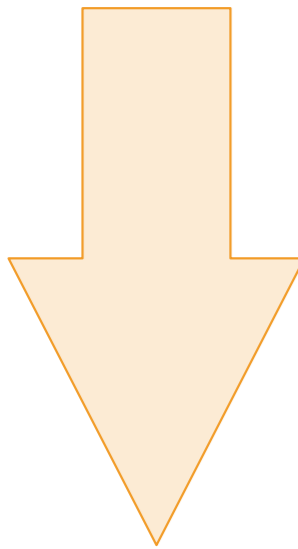
- New plan includes acquisition of properties at 245 and 247 Fort Lee Rd.
  - Existing homes are NOT owner occupied
- Appraisals of homes = ~\$550K per home
- Borough has been trying to negotiate purchase with existing owners
- Borough will do everything possible to negotiate traditional properties at reasonable price; if efforts fail, Borough will purchase properties at fair market value, through condemnation



# Property Acquisition – Current Status

- 245 Fort Lee Rd.
  - First offer (appraised value): **rejected**
  - Second offer: (+20% vs. appraised value): **rejected**
  - Property owner counter-offered at +35% vs. appraised value
  - Third offer (+35% vs. appraised value): **rejected**
  - Property owner counter-offered at +63% vs. appraised value
- 247 Fort Lee Rd.
  - First offer (appraised value): **rejected**
  - Property owner did not agree with appraisal; Borough asked for counter-offer
  - Property owner has not had any further contact with Borough (Borough has repeatedly attempted to follow-up, to no avail)

# Next Steps



**Public Input/  
Plan Revision  
(June/July, 2020)**

**Bid Document  
Preparation/Issuance  
(Summer/Fall, 2020)**

**Vendor  
Selection  
(Late 2020)**

**Project  
Initiation  
(January, 2021)**

**Project  
Completion  
2021**



# Frequently Asked Questions/ Key Takeaways



# FAQs/Key Takeaways

## Question

## Answer

**Why is this project necessary?**

The current Police Department HQ, Municipal Court and Borough Hall are outdated and have been cited for numerous violations of state and local codes. Proper renovations are not cost effective (in some cases, not legal); thus a new building is necessary to address these issues

**Is this the only option that was considered?**

No – numerous other options were considered, including building in other locations. What is proposed is the solution that best balances cost and taxpayer impact with necessary improvements and incorporates resident feedback

**How much is this going to cost?**

Although costs won't be finalized until bids are received, the project is expected to cost approximately \$10.2 million. The impact to the average homeowner will be approximately \$225 - \$275/year for 15 years

# FAQs/Key Takeaways

## Question

## Answer

**Could the project end up costing less?**

**Yes – if the ultimate decision is to sell or rent the existing Borough Hall (which, as a historic landmark, cannot be demolished), additional offsetting revenue could be realized (property appraised at ~\$750K - \$900K)**

**Do we have to buy the properties on Fort Lee Rd.?**

**Yes - in order to ensure that the needs of all of the Departments are met, and to ensure that there is enough parking for employees and visitors, the footprint must include the old Ambulance Corps building and the two properties on Fort Lee Rd.**

**Will this impact Wood Park?**

**No – constructing the building on the location proposed will avoid any impact to Wood Park, eliminating unnecessary payments to Green Acres**



## Question

**What will the new building look like?**

**Can we afford a new municipal building?**

## Answer

**The new building will blend the historic charm of Leonia while incorporating elements that will allow it to blend in with the more modern design themes of the Library**

The Borough's financial advisors (auditor, CFO, bond counsel and others) were consulted as the plan was being developed; they have indicated that the project cost keeps the Borough's debt within reasonable limits. The combination of retiring current debt, as well as the Borough's excellent credit rating and low bond interest rates, will result in reasonable long-term debt costs.

The costs to renovate the existing buildings would be similar (if not more), but would not allow the same level of flexibility, utility savings, and predictability in terms of the need for future repairs and maintenance



# Now It's Your Turn!

