

Northwest Schoolhouse is a historic, multi-level community facility that currently hosts daily AA recovery meetings, weekly classes in yoga, tai chi, and karate, and a growing roster of educational and cultural programs. This week Lower Cape Outreach is using the Schoolhouse to provide free toys for needy families.

However, the building's lack of an elevator prevents older adults, residents with disabilities, and individuals with limited mobility from safely accessing programming on all floors. This significantly restricts equitable participation in essential health, wellness, and recovery services.

Installing a four-story elevator is therefore critical for accessibility. Without it, the building cannot meet basic ADA standards, cannot serve a substantial portion of the Orleans population, and cannot fully function as the inclusive cultural and community facility the Town and region need.

Adding an elevator transforms Northwest Schoolhouse from a partially accessible building into a fully inclusive community hub. It makes the entire facility usable for public meetings, cultural events, workshops, wellness classes, intergenerational programs, and emergency-response or sheltering functions when needed. The public benefit is immediate, ongoing, and substantial.

The proposed elevator addition has been professionally designed with CPC funds by the architectural firm of Fredrichs and Maclean of Cataumet. They have indicated that it would require \$10,000 to bring their 81 page plan up to current building codes in terms of electrical, mechanical and structural changes to the building code.

Up to date architectural plans for a four-story elevator addition will make this project shovel ready and eligible for large grants such as the Cultural Facilities Fund grants from the Massachusetts Cultural council.