CHAPTER VII
COMMUNITY FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Historically, rural communities in New Hampshire have very few community services. In many cases, these services were limited to only a Town Hall and public school. However, as the population of New Hampshire increased, more services were added to meet the needs of the citizenry. Today, communities are expected to and in some instances are legally required to provide police and fire protection, as well as highway crews, waste disposal, recreational facilities, and professional staff to manage the daily operations of Town government.

Like other rural communities, the Town of Sutton provides vital services to the citizenry. Fire and police protection ensure the safety of all residents. The school system provides the children of Bow with an adequate public education. The Highway Department maintains roads year-round, including snow removal during the winter months.

The purpose of this Chapter is to inventory and assess current town facilities and programs, identify and assess the adequacy of existing equipment and future equipment needs, identify current and long-term staffing needs, and identify long-term facility and service needs. In order to provide community services in an efficient and effective manner, the Town must assess its current and future needs in order to anticipate future demands and services for the various Departments. Sutton must also develop a mechanism to ensure coherence and consistency among all town and school district agencies. This mechanism can increase opportunities to plan efficient, attractive and long-lasting facilities. By having community facilities that are up-to-date, responsive to residents needs, and operating in the most effective and efficient manner, Sutton will be able to retain its small-town essence while providing high-quality amenities to its residents and businesses.

TOWN HALL OFFICES

The Town Hall is located in the Pillsbury Memorial Hall in Sutton Mills and was built in XXX. The Town Hall houses the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen, Police Department, and the files for the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and Conservation Commission.

Over the years, the current Town Hall has been able to meet the needs of the town staff, boards and committees, and the general community. However, as the Town continues to grow, there may be a need to relocate Departments, services, or Commissions/Board to other areas within Town to better utilize the existing space at the Town Hall. This will likely require new facilities to be built somewhere else in Town.

Goal

To meet the needs of town residents in an efficient and effective manner.

Recommendations

- Research the need and cost for a Finance Director, Planning and Zoning Administrator, and an additional clerk within the next 5 years.
- Create an archival system and storage location for Town documents that is easily accessible and secure.
- Investigate the desirability and cost of using the Internet to provide services and information from the various Town Departments and Committees.

Goal

To ensure that Town staff and users of the Town offices are conducting business in a safe, secure, and efficient building that meets their needs.

Recommendations

- Address the ADA accessibility issues in and around the Town Hall to ensure that the Town is serving all residents.
- Establish a capital reserve fund for the expansion of town offices within the existing structure or the relocation of offices to another facility.
- Undertake a space-needs study in 2005 to address the space needs of all Town Departments and Boards for the next 20-25 years.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Sutton Fire Department was incorporated in XXX and is an all volunteer Department. This Department provides fire prevention services to all residents and businesses in Sutton. The Department also educates the public on fire prevention, smoke detector checks, and does life safety inspections for properties within Town.

Calls for Service

Calls for service include medical calls, motor vehicle accidents, fires, false alarms, and other service calls. Since 1994, the number of calls for service the Fire Department has responded to has remained fairly constant with a jump in 2003, which can be seen in the tables below.

Calls for Service 1994 - 2003

Year	Total Calls for Service[1]
1994	61
1995	75
1996	64
1997	66
1998	57
1999	67
2000	83

[1] Majority of calls are for motor vehicle accidents on I-93.

2001	77
2002	88
2003	102
Total	740

Source: Town Reports

1994-2003 Calls per Capita

Year	Total Calls for Service	Population Estimates	Calls per Person
1994	61	1,472	24.1
1995	75	1,478	19.7
1996	64	1,472	23.0
1997	66	1,489	22.6
1998	57	1,479	25.9
1999	67	1,500	22.4
2000	83	1,544	18.6
2001	77	1,600	20.8
2002	88	1,629	18.5
2003	102	1,686	16.5

Source: Town Reports, US Census, OEP Population Estimates

1994-2003 Calls per Fire Fighter Volunteers

Year	Total Number of Calls for Service	Number of Volunteers	Calls per Staff/ Volunteers/On-call Personnel
1994	61		
1995	75	21	3.6
1996	64	21	3.0
1997	66	22	3.0
1998	57	22	2.6
1999	67		
2000	83		
2001	77		
2002	88		
2003	102	31	3.3

Source: Town Reports

Review of Facility Needs

Review of Equipment Needs

The Fire Department received two grants in 2003 for the purchase of a Cascade System for filling air bottles and the other was for a forest fire pump.

Review of Fire Department Staffing Needs
The Town of Sutton participates with X other area towns to provide mutual aid coverage, which is an agreement between area fire departments that allows for additional assistance to be sent when needed.

Goal
To ensure that the Fire Department facility and equipment can meet the needs of the Department and community through long-range budgeting and planning.

Recommendations

- Establish a capital reserve fund for building maintenance that can annually be added to by Town Meeting.
- Establish a capital reserve fund for equipment purchases that can annually be added to by Town Meeting.

Goal
To ensure that development proposals address fire safety issues.

Recommendation

- Investigate the impacts that proposed large-scale developments may have on fire protection services by having the Fire Department review all major subdivision applications and Site Plans.

RESCUE SQUAD

The Sutton Rescue Squad was incorporated in XXX and is an all volunteer Department. This Department provides XXXXX.

Calls for Service
Calls for service include medical calls, motor vehicle accidents, fires, false alarms, and other service calls. Since 1994, the number of calls for service the Rescue Squad has responded to has remained fairly constant, which can be seen in the tables below.

Calls for Service[2] 1994 - 2003

Year	Total Calls for Service
1994	78
1995	103
1996	93
1997	92
1998	100
1999	
2000	

[2] Most calls for service are for motor vehicle accidents on I-89.

2001	95
2002	100
2003	154
Total	

Source: Town Reports

1994-2003 Calls per Capita

Year	Total Calls for Service	Population Estimates	Calls per Person
1994	78	1,472	18.9
1995	103	1,478	14.3
1996	93	1,472	15.8
1997	92	1,489	16.2
1998	100	1,479	14.8
1999		1,500	
2000		1,544	
2001	95	1,600	16.8
2002	100	1,629	16.3
2003	154	1,686	10.9

Source: Town Reports, US Census, OEP Population estimates

1994-2003 Calls per Rescue Squad Volunteers

Year	Total Number of Calls for Service	Number of Volunteers	Calls per Volunteers Personnel
1994	78	13	6.0
1995	103	11	9.4
1996	93	12	7.8
1997	92	11	8.4
1998	100		
1999		12	
2000		10	
2001	95	13	7.3
2002	100	15	6.7
2003	154	15	10.3

Source: Town Reports

Review of Facility Needs

Review of Equipment Needs

There is an agreement between the Sutton Rescue Squad and the Bradford Ambulance and the New London Hospital Ambulance to provide transport of people to area hospitals if needed, thus allowing Sutton not to have to provide this service.

Review of Rescue Squad Staffing Needs

Goal

Recommendations

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Sutton Police Department was incorporated in XXX and is located in the bottom floor of the Town Hall. This Department provides DARE education in the Sutton Central School to 5th graders, XXXXXX.

Calls for Service
From 1994 to 2003, the Police Department calls for service have fluctuated annually, which can be seen in the tables below.

Calls for Service, 1994-2002

Year	Calls
1994	NA[3]
1995	2,495
1996	2,263
1997	2,294
1998	1,755
1999	2,415
2000	1,735
2001	2,804
2002	1,961
2003	

Source: Town Reports

1994-2003 Calls per Capita

Year	Total Calls for Service	Population Estimates	Calls per Person
1994	NA	1,472	NA
1995	2,495	1,478	1.7
1996	2,263	1,472	1.5
1997	2,294	1,489	1.5

[3] 1994 figures are not comparable because of a change in reporting.

1998	1,755	1,479	1.2
1999	2,415	1,500	1.6
2000	1,735	1,544	1.1
2001	2,804	1,600	1.8
2002	1,961	1,629	1.2
2003		1,686	

Source: Town Reports, US Census, OEP Population Projections

1994-2003 Calls per Staff

Year	Total Number of Calls for Service	Number of Staff	Calls per Staff/
1994	NA		
1995	2,495		
1996	2,263		
1997	2,294		
1998	1,755		
1999	2,415		
2000	1,735		
2001	2,804		
2002	1,961		
2003			

Source: Town Reports

Review of Facility Needs

The location and size of the current Police Department is inadequate and poses potential safety issues to the staff and community members. There is no handicap access to the Department and there are 13 stairs that need to be passed to even reach the Department, which can be very dangerous when wet.

This would allow for street level access to the Department and would locate all emergency services at one location. The current facility has a generator, which would provide temporary emergency power in the event of a power outage.

Review of Equipment Needs

Review of Police Department Staffing Needs

Goal

To ensure that the Police Department facility and equipment can meet the needs of the Department and community through long-range budgeting and planning.

Recommendations

- Establish a capital reserve fund for equipment purchases that can annually be added to by Town Meeting.
- Review the various options for relocating the Police Department out of the Town Hall. This review should include land costs, building costs, and equipment costs associated with the relocation and how should relocation should be paid for (bonds, capital reserve funds, selling of town property, etc.).

Goal
To ensure that development proposals address safety issues.

Recommendation

- Investigate the impacts that proposed large-scale developments may have on safety services by having the Police Department review all major subdivision applications and Site Plans.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

The role of the Sutton Highway Department is to maintain town roadways and to make improvements that are necessary to provide safe and convenient travel. Maintenance duties of the Department include road grading, paving, snow removal, drainage improvements and other repairs, as they are needed. The Department purchases equipment as approved at Town Meeting and performs most repair and maintenance in-house at the Town garage.

See the Transportation Chapter for more information on the Highway Department.

Facility Needs
The Highway Department facility is located at XXX and is approximately XXXX in size, which includes the office area, garages, and salt storage. This facility is inadequate for the current Department operations because XXXXXX and should be replaced/expanded.

Equipment Needs

Staffing Needs

Goal
To ensure that the Highway Department facility and equipment can meet the needs of the Department and community through long-range budgeting and planning.

Recommendations[4]

- Establish a capital reserve fund for equipment purchases that can annually be added to by Town Meeting.

[4] See the Transportation Chapter for more Highway Department recommendations.

- Establish a capital reserve fund for the expansion replacement of the current department facility, including feasibility and architectural studies, land acquisition costs, and the actual building that can be added to each year by Town Meeting.

SUTTON FREE LIBRARY

The library is located in Sutton Mills, near the Town Hall, in a building originally built in XXXX.

The following table highlights the circulation of library materials by patron type and material type, as tracked by the computer system.

2003 Circulation by Patron Type	
Adult Circulation	
Juvenile Circulation	
Total Circulation	
2003 Circulation by Material Type	
Printed Matter Circulation	
Audio Circulation	
Video Circulation	
Total Circulation	
Total of Registered Card Holder Patrons	

Source: 2004 Sutton Free Library Staff

In recent years, the volume and variety of materials the Library has to offer has increased significantly. The current collection that the Library holds can be seen below.

Summary of Library Collection, 2003

Categories	Number of Items
Books	
Audio Books	
Video Cassettes	
CD's	
Audio Cassettes	
Total	

Source: Sutton Free Library 2004

The Library provides a children's summer reading program and an adult springtime reading program, both of which are funded through the NH Humanities Council. The Library Trustees has also offered periodic craft workshops as a way to raise funds for book purchases.

Staffing Needs
Currently, the Librarian is the only paid staff person but there are a few residents who volunteer regularly at the Library. The Library Trustees also are responsible for many of the operations of the Library.

Facility Space and Equipment Needs
The library is crowded and there are few options available to try to alleviate this short of removing portions of the collection. There is limited equipment in the Library but it currently includes two public computers with internet access, a TV, VCR, and photocopier.

Goal
To ensure that the Library building and equipment meets the needs of the community

Recommendation

- Establish a capital reserve fund for building maintenance that can be annually added to by Town Meeting.
- Make sure that the building, equipment, and staff/volunteers meet all state and federal regulations, such as fire safety, ADA, and library privacy rules and requirements.

Goal
To provide services and resources that residents of Sutton are interested in.

Recommendations

- Conduct a community survey to assess the interest of the community members in various programs, services, books, etc. in order to accurately plan and budget for such things.
- Create a comment/suggestion box to be placed in the Library to solicit on-going feedback from patrons.
- Partner with the schools to avoid duplication of services and resources, as well as increase participation by students in the library.
- Take greater advantage of funding opportunities offered by the state and other non-profit organizations to help expand current program offerings, such as workshops, book signings, reading programs, and music.
- Create an easy to use tracking system for library holdings in order to assess the types of books that are of interest to the patrons. This information can help direct future purchases as well as crating a methodology for removing some items from the collection (i.e. book sale).

SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING FACILITY

Sutton does not offer municipal curb-side trash/recycling pick-up. All residents much bring their waste to the solid waste and recycling facility or hire a private hauler. The 2003 figures for material collected at the Transfer Station can be seen below.

2003 Solid Waste and Recycling Facility Figures

Residential Municipal Solid Waste	200 tons
Construction & Demolition Debris	98 tons
Leaf &Yard Waste/Brush	30 cubic yards
Mixed Paper/Cardboard[5]	200 tons
Glass	90 tons
Cans	14 tons
Scrap Metal	150 XX
Computers	90/yr
Propane Tanks	75/yr
Fluorescent Tubes	100/yr
Batteries	300/yr

Source: Transfer Station Director, August 2004

In 2003, the cost for disposal of trash at the Lebanon incinerator, which is where the municipal solid waste is disposed of, is based on a rate of $57/ton for trash (2001-2011 contract). If Sutton exceeds its Guaranteed Annual Tonnage (GAT), which is XXX tons, the cost increases to $XXX/ton.

Recycling in Sutton is mandatory and in 2003, $XXX was made by selling recyclable materials collected at the solid waste and recycling facility. The types of materials accepted at the transfer station for recycling include glass, paper and cardboard, cans, scrap metal, batteries, used oil, and tires.

The solid waste and recycling facility also accepts yard waste/brush, construction debris, florescent lights, and other bulky items (refrigerators, washers, dryers, etc.). Residential septage is also accepted.

Every year the Town participates in a regional household hazardous waste day with the Town of Henniker in which residents can safely dispose of hazardous materials, such as paint, motor oil, and batteries.

Staffing and Equipment Needs
There are currently 2 full-time (plus an addition part-time person in the staff people that manage the solid waste and recycling facility.

Goal
To ensure that the Transfer Station facility and equipment can meet the needs of the Department and community through long-range budgeting and planning.

[5] The Town receives $35/ton for this material.

Recommendations

- Establish a capital reserve fund for building maintenance that can annually be added to by Town Meeting.
- Establish a capital reserve fund for equipment purchases that can annually be added to by Town Meeting.
- Establish a capital reserve fund for special studies that may be required for environmental permitting processes.

Goal

To increase public awareness on the transfer station operations.

Recommendations

- Provide public education materials about the benefits of recycling, including the environmental, public health, and cost savings to the community.
- Provide information in the Annual Report on the amount of solid waste, recycling, septic sludge, brush, etc. collected, as well as posting monthly totals at the Transfer Station.

TOWN-OWNED CEMETERIES

There are X cemeteries in Sutton that the Town maintains in some way. There are three elected Cemetery Trustees, making the policies and budgets that govern the Town-Owned Cemeteries. A listing of the cemeteries located in Sutton can be seen below.

Town-Owned Cemeteries in Sutton

Cemetery	Location	Size (acres)	# of Plots Remaining

Source:

Goal

To ensure on-going preservation and up-keep of the Town-owned cemeteries.

Recommendations

- Digital pictures should be taken of all headstones to ensure that the information will be preserved and to create a record for maintenance purposes.
- Establish a capital reserve fund for cemetery maintenance that can be annually added to by Town Meeting.

Goal

To ensure the future burial needs of Sutton residents/families will be met.

Recommendations

- The Town-Cemeteries should be mapped to show the locations of all occupied and unoccupied plots, the inscription on the gravestone, a picture of the gravestone, and all purchased but yet unoccupied plots.
- Create a plan, budget, location, and timeline for the establishment of a new cemetery.

SUTTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

The Sutton Central School is an elementary school that houses kindergarten through fifth grade. The school is for Sutton residents and those children wishing to pay tuition to attend, which cost approximately XXXX annually. The school is located at XXXX and was built in XXXXX.

Staffing Levels

Enrollment Figures

School Department needs, more than any other community facility, are dictated by the future population trends of a community. As the number of school-aged children rise and fall, staffing, facility, and operating projections need to be made and budgeted for. Because many of these expenses, such as an addition to a building, can take years to plan and finish, enrollment projections are vital to ensuring that adequate budgeting and planning are done.

School Enrollment* Figures, 1994-2003

Year	Enrollment
1994	92
1995	100
1996	95
1997	90
1998	87
1999	90
2000	92
2001	96
2002	
2003	

Source: KRSD Office of the Superintendent
* Enrollment is determined by XXXXX

Facility Needs

Goal

To proactively plan for school facilities in a timely manner.

Recommendation

- Continuously review current and projected enrollment figures in order to meet the needs of the students.
- If school expansion becomes necessary, investigate the feasibility of expanding the existing facility at its current site or building a new elementary school where the middle school is being built.

KEARSARGE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Town of Sutton is part of the Kearsarge Regional School District, which contains X other towns. The middle school (grades 6-8) is located in New London and was built in XXXX. The high school (grades 9-12) is located in Sutton, on XXXX, and was built in XXXX and is used by X other towns.

Staffing Levels

In 2004, the Regional School District approved the 2004-2007 teachers contract, which covers XXX teachers in the middle and high school.

Enrollment Figures

School Department needs, more than any other community facility, are dictated by the future population trends of a community. As the number of school-aged children rise and fall, staffing, facility, and operating projections need to be made and budgeted for. Because many of these expenses, such as an addition to a building, can take years to plan and finish, enrollment projections are vital to ensuring that adequate budgeting and planning are done.

School Enrollment* Figures, 1994-2003

Year	Kearsarge Regional Middle School	Kearsarge Regional High School
1994	73	53
1995	67	73
1996	69	88
1997	49	98
1998	61	87
1999	70	77
2000	75	85
2001	84	81
2002		
2003		

Source: KRSD, Office of the Superintendent

* Enrollment is determined by XXX. Sutton portion only

Facility Needs
In 2003, the decision was made for the Regional School District to purchase 86 acres in Sutton for a new middle school. This will replace the existing school in New London and have a capacity of 700 students. This new school is necessary because the current middle school has a capacity of 450 students and the enrollment is at 562 (2003 figures). There is also ADA compliance and health and safety issues at the current middle school that would be easier to address by building a new facility, rather than trying to fix the current building.

The high school also has capacity issues that need to be addressed fairly quickly. The school is over capacity, which is negatively impacting programs and services offered to students.

Goal
To proactively plan for school facilities in a timely manner.

Recommendation

- The Regional School Board and Town should work together to proactively plan and pay for additional school facilities in a timely manner.
- Conduct a feasibility study for adding a second floor to the high school to alleviate the over-capacity concerns.

Goal
To use school facilities in an efficient and effective manner.

Recommendation

- The Regional School District should conduct a feasibility study for future uses of the existing middle school building in New London. Sutton should actively participate in this study.

STRATEGIES TO MEET COMMUNITY FACILITIES NEEDS

The following is an inventory of alternative financing sources and strategies Sutton could employ to help pay for needed staff, equipment, and facilities in various Departments. These suggestions should be reviewed by Department Heads and the Board of Selectmen as ways to meet the goals and recommendations outlined in this Chapter.

Bonds
Bonding is a popular method of raising revenue to construct or purchase town equipment and facilities. Though viable, the Town should avoid encumbering too much debt, as it can limit the ability of the Town to provide for future, unidentified needs.

Capital Reserve Funds
Capital reserve funds are similar to savings accounts, as they allow the Town to contribute money to a specific account for the purpose of purchasing or defraying the cost of significant items such as school additions, highway equipment, fire trucks, and municipal buildings and facilities.

Grants-in-aid
New Hampshire communities are eligible for various grants in aid for financing school construction and improvements. Examples include:

- Foundation Aid to help schools provide minimum education
- Building Aid
- Area Vocational School Tuition and Transportation Aid
- Handicap Education Aid
- Sweepstakes Aid
- Nutrition Grants
- Driver Education

Growth Management
The purpose of this Ordinance is to regulate and control the timing of development in accordance with the objectives of both the Master Plan and the Capital Improvements Program, which are adopted by the Planning Board. By having a Growth Management Ordinance in place, Town Departments are able to anticipate growth to occur in a more orderly and manageable way. This allows future capital needs planning and budgeting to happen in a proactive way, as opposed to reacting to large unanticipated growth in any certain year.

Impact Fees
A municipal impact fee represents a one-time, up-front charge on a new development to pay for future public capital costs serving new development, or to recover past expenditures in capacity to accommodate that development. Impact fees are most commonly used in New Hampshire for the funding of schools, roads, and recreational facilities. However, impact fees are also being used for fire protection, police department, library, solid waste, water and sewer, and municipal administrative facilities.

The amount of any assessed impact fee should be a proportional share of the municipal capital improvement costs, which are related to the capital needs created by the new development. The impact fees must not be spent on upgrading, replacing, or maintaining existing facilities and services, which already exist prior to any new development. The Town has six years in which to spend the collected fee. If it is not used within that period of time the money must be returned to the property owner.

License and Permit Fees
Fees, such as building permits, zoning applications, and planning board subdivision and site plan fees are all examples of permit fees. Such fees are highly equitable and are successful for minimizing the burden on taxpayers for specific programs, such fees are currently collected by the Planning, Zoning, and Building Department.

Private Foundations / Trusts
For years, communities have been the beneficiaries of trusts and donations created by private citizens and foundations. The Town should actively solicit such resources for assistance regarding the development or expansion of recreational facilities and programs..

Sale of Surplus Town Property and Land
Sale of town owned property is another viable option for raising funds to pay for new community facilities. Parcels that should be liquidated include those that have no significant conservation or cultural value, or limited potential for future community facilities.

User Fees
During the 1980s, the concept of user fees for the funding of numerous public facilities and services were widely adopted throughout the nation. To help finance community facilities and programs, several communities in New Hampshire have adopted user fees.

CONCLUSION

The provision of community services and facilities is one of the primary functions of government. As the population and demographics of Sutton grow and change over time, it is important that the community make adjustments in its delivery of services to meet those changes. Trends for the future indicate that certain services will be provided on a regional basis, with multiple towns sharing the costs for equipment and staffing. Other services may in the near future become Internet-based, such as billing and payment of taxes.

The recommendations made in this Chapter address some of the changes that could potentially be made to community facilities to help maintain a high level of service. It is evident that each department in Sutton is in need of additional staff, new or expanded facilities, or equipment upgrades. Although many of these requests have already been planned for, Sutton needs to be proactive in its financing and planning to ensure that community services remain at their current level of quality and that the residents are not burdened with large tax increases to pay for such services all at once.

Efficient community facilities and services that meet the needs of the public are important for maintaining and improving quality of life. Sutton is a desirable community because of its small-town feel and numerous amenities. In the future, community facilities will continue to play a crucial role in Sutton's ability to attract potential newcomers as well as retain current residents.