

H. SERVICES AND FACILITIES

H-1.0 Introduction

The Services and Facilities Element covers some of the basic necessities of life - water to drink; the safe and sanitary disposal of human, domestic and industrial waste; the protection of life and property; and intellectual enlightenment through books and education. These are services which, in most cases, are more efficiently and advantageously provided collectively rather than individually.

As everyone knows, teachers, librarians, police officers, fire fighters, sewer pipes and water mains all cost money; in the aggregate, they account for a majority of the expenditures which communities such as North Smithfield must cover through the imposition of ad valorem taxes on real estate. Although State and Federal dictates and standards often determine the minimum acceptable levels for providing municipal services, in the final analysis each community must determine the quality desired. Essentially, the Town's elected officials and the electorate are charged with deciding the whats, hows, whens and costs of providing the staff and facilities to serve the common good.

In this Element, we start out with an inventory of public facilities which have evolved over a period of years to serve a growing community. The Town must deal now with some problems which had their beginnings many years ago, for example: portions of the Town are inadequately served by fragmented water sources and there are problem areas where poor soils, small lots, and combined onsite wells and septic systems may produce unhealthy conditions. Several school buildings are overcrowded and/or are in disrepair. Additionally, state regulatory requirements such as for stormwater and water treatment are more stringent and costly than ever before. In some areas, the work of volunteers helps to reduce costs which, in many communities, are provided by paid staff. Such is the case for the two contractual fire fighting service companies and assistance in maintaining the Animal Shelter.

If we were to start with a clean slate today, it is unlikely that Town administrative functions would be split between the Town Hall and a Municipal Annex three miles away, nor would one place the Public Works Garage at the northernmost point in Town. In spite of these conditions, the Town has managed well for many years and services are provided in a relatively efficient manner.

It is the intent of the Services and Facilities Element to evaluate existing conditions, determine short and long range needs, and establish an implementable and cost-effective plan and program for the future. Where possible, the Town should investigate opportunities for the regionalization of municipal functions.

Map H-4, Services and Facilities Plan, shows the location of existing public buildings in North Smithfield.

H-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. PROVIDE FACILITIES NECESSARY TO EDUCATE STUDENTS WHO WILL BE COMPETITIVE IN THE STATE, NATIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMY

- A. Maintain existing schools to serve educational needs.
- B. Consider additional school facilities.
- C. Continue to monitor building permit and other conditions impacting school enrollment trends.
- D. Coordinate use and improvement of school playground and sports facilities with the Town's recreational plans and programs.

2. ORGANIZE PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN A MANNER WHICH WILL ALLOW THE MOST EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

- A. Conduct detailed needs assessment of municipal administration space needs.
- B. Evaluate options for a new Town Hall that will house all the administrative functions, meeting hall space and possibly the library at one facility. Options should include the adaptive reuse of the Slatersville Mill and Kendall Dean School.
- C. Continue operating the Public Works Garage at the present location, with expansion as necessary.
- D. Investigate a possible relocation of the Police and Emergency Operations Center to a more central location.
- E. Continue to pursue the municipalization of the North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Service.
- F. Evaluate options to provide better fire protection to the southeast section of Town.

3. EXPAND SEWER AND WATER SERVICES AS NECESSARY TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS, PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- A. Ensure that there is dialogue between the Town Council, organization that oversees the Town's water resources, Sewer Commission and the Planning Board regarding land use impacts of expanding infrastructure into new service areas.

- B. Connect the Waterford/Mendon Road area to the City of Woonsocket's water distribution system.
- C. Coordinate with neighboring communities to achieve the mandated emergency water system interconnect.
- D. Continue discussions with neighboring communities regarding the development of a regional water system to ensure existing and future customers have a safe, reliable supply of water.
- E. Carry out phased program to enhance system redundancy including development of additional water supply wells, pump stations, water storage facilities and fire hydrants in community water system areas and expand system with emphasis on economic development priorities residential areas with the greatest needs.
- F. Update the long range Wastewater Facilities Plan for extending sewer services with emphasis on economic development priorities, areas with onsite system failures, and meeting local affordable housing needs.

4. FORMULATE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AREAS SERVED BY INDIVIDUAL WASTEWATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

- A. Establish Wastewater Management Districts in appropriate locations to prevent water pollution and to preclude the need for more expensive sewer services.

5. CONSIDER REGIONALIZATION OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

- A. As a policy, consider the benefits of regional versus local programs where there are cost reduction and service delivery benefits to be gained by the Town of North Smithfield.

6. IMPLEMENT MEASURES OF THE PHASE II STORMWATER PROGRAM PERTAINING TO DRAINAGE FACILITIES AND ROADS

- A. Continue practice of cleaning and inspecting catch basins at least twice a year.
- B. Continue the practice of sweeping streets a minimum of once a year.
- C. Implement the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan at the Public Works Garage and provide necessary data for monitoring reports.

H-3.0 Plan Description

H-3.1 Inventory of School Facilities

In January of 2004, the North Smithfield Town Council established the School Facilities Planning Task Force Committee (SFPTF), and charged it with developing a Comprehensive Master Plan that would address the long term needs and educational program requirements of the entire district. The SFPTF developed the following Mission Statement:

To develop a true and objective comprehensive study of our school educational and support needs leading to prioritized recommendations on how to meet our educational needs along with long range help and advice to support a successful bond referendum.

The Town hired the team of Gilbane Building Company and The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation (Gilbane/RGB) to develop the Master Plan and work with the SFPTF. Much of the following is excerpted from an August 2004 draft of the *Comprehensive Master Plan for the North Smithfield School Department* prepared by Gilbane/RGB.

The North Smithfield School District comprises approximately 258,000 SF of buildings. For the most part, they are being well maintained. The exception is the Halliwell Memorial School, that due to its wood frame, wood sided construction and campus arrangement, is nearly impossible to maintain effectively. The last expansion and renovation program was completed in 2001 with renovations and additions to North Smithfield Elementary School (NSES). During that program, a 15,000 s.f. addition to NSES was the only project completed, representing approximately 5% of the total existing school space. The remaining 243,000 s.f. of facility space breaks down as follows: The newest school facility, NSES, with a total of 71,130 s.f. of space was constructed in 1989, and requires very minimal updating. The 173,400 s.f. Junior / Senior High School constructed in 1967 has been well maintained, but suffers from typical facility shortfalls to be expected of a facility of this age. The space constraints imposed on the facility by running the dual mission of a middle school and high school educational curriculum are its major issue. The 33,346 s.f. Halliwell Memorial School, consisting of a campus of 11 wood framed structures constructed in 1957, as indicated above suffers from a myriad of physical facility issues. The oldest school, the tiny 16,200 s.f. Kendall-Dean school, occupying a minimal 3.4 acre site in the heart of Slatersville, was constructed in the 1930's and was used by students until January 2002 when the addition to NSES was completed. The school is currently housing the District Administration Offices.

All schools receive very hard use and are being used for longer periods during the day and year, leaving less time for maintenance and repair. With the exception of NSES, some of major issues identified in the school district include:

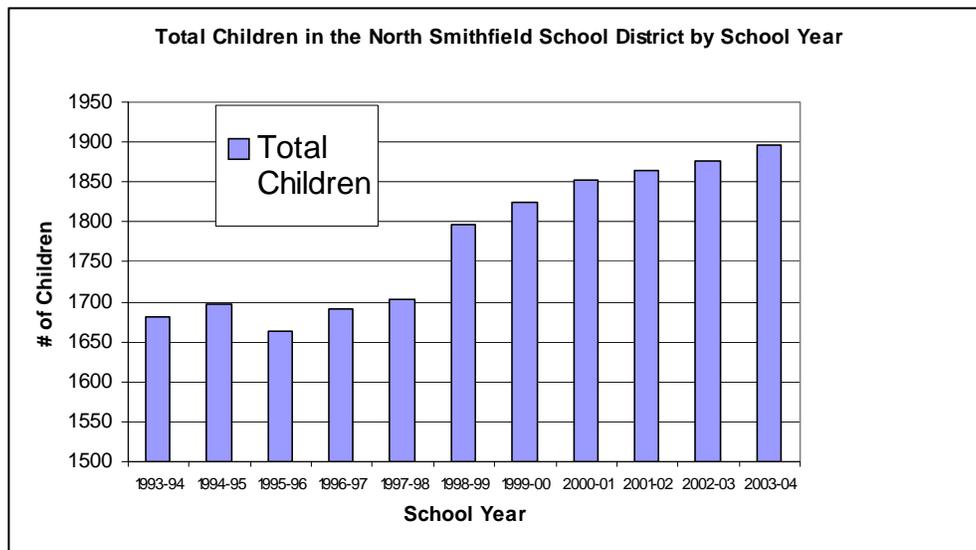
- Sites that are at or near their capacity and not capable of expansion without property acquisition;
- Aging and failing septic / ISDS systems;
- Roofs of varying vintage with Halliwell School needing immediate attention;

- Aged, damaged and worn interior finishes, doors, hardware, etc.;
- Aged heat distribution systems;
- Lack of make-up fresh air ventilation;
- Pneumatic, aged, HV AC control. No energy management systems in place;
- Isolated storm water drainage issues;
- Uninsulated masonry exterior walls with localized masonry deterioration;
- Uninsulated, drafty original wood windows;
- Energy inefficient lighting remains in many areas;
- Outdated electrical equipment and services;
- Non-water conserving plumbing fixtures;
- Spaces that are not ADA compliant for accessibility;
- Asbestos containing finish materials (in their present state non hazardous, but should be removed and replaced);
- In general, lack of current technology in the classroom.

H-3.1.1 Current School Enrollment

School enrollment for grades K-12 has increased steadily over the past 10 years beginning with 1,681 children in 1993/94.

Chart H-3.1.1 School Enrollment 1993 - 2003



As of the beginning of the 2003/04 school year, **1,912** students were enrolled in North Smithfield Public Schools. Of these, **183** students are enrolled in a half day Pre-K program, and a full day Kindergarten program located at North Smithfield Elementary School (NSES). An additional **884** students comprising Grade 1-6 are split between NSES and the Halliwell Memorial School with the remaining **845** Grade 7-12 students attending North Smithfield Jr. / Sr. High School.

H-3.1.2 Projected School Enrollment

School enrollments are established by, but not limited to, birth rates, housing construction trends, grade retention rates and competition from private and parochial schools. These and other considerations are used by the New England School Development Council (NESDC) in providing annual projections of school enrollments for North Smithfield.

Table H-3.1.2 Existing/Projected Enrollment by Grade

	Existing Enrollment 2003/04 (Actual)	Projected Enrollment 2003/04 (NESDEC)	Projected Enrollment 2004/05 (NESDEC)	Projected Enrollment 2008/09 (5 year)
Pre-K (2-Half day Sessions)	52	49	60	60
Kindergarten (Full Day)	131	130	150	126
Grade 1	147	148	136	138
Grade 2	126	125	154	126
Grade 3	152	147	130	147
Grade 4	143	146	150	173
Grade 5	152	150	153	157
Grade 6	164	163	153	173
Grade 7	178	173	163	142
Grade 8	131	129	175	162
Grade 9	144	140	134	164
Grade 10	136	139	132	150
Grade 11	132	134	132	153
Grade 12	124	123	135	163
Total Enrollment/ Projections	1912	1896	1957	2034

Demographics indicate that enrollments at all levels will continue to increase, with the addition of an estimated **138** students within the school system by the 2008/09 school year (7.3% growth). Long term (ten year) NESDEC projections indicate continued growth within the school system based on historical data, indicating that additional growth should be expected and planned for.

Projections indicate an additional **20** students entering the Kindergarten program and **11** students entering the Pre-K program in the upcoming 2004/05 school year. This spike will require the addition of one possible pre-K room and three full time Kindergarten rooms in order to maintain optimal class size of 18 students per class. The existing five kindergarten classrooms are currently over capacity at 26 students per classroom, and will require the addition of Kindergarten teachers to meet contract requirements, teaching in less than optimal conditions. As indicated in five year projections, this Kindergarten spike will level off back to current conditions by 2005/06, however, Pre-K is predicted to remain at 60 students, making the Pre-K program function at full capacity.

Five year NESDEC projections indicate that Grade 1 – 6 enrollment will increase by an additional **35** students by the 2008/09 school year or approximately 4% growth. Five year trends also show continued growth within the 7 – 12 grade grouping, adding approximately **96** students by the 2008/09 school year with a long term predicted increase of **130** students attending the facility by the 2012/13 school year. This places five year growth within the secondary grades at close to 11%, with long term (10 year) projections placing the rate of enrollment increase at over 15%.

In 2003/04, North Smithfield students attending private or parochial schools or vocational technical schools totaled 155. (This number may be expected to decrease as improvements to North Smithfield's public school system are made.)

H-3.1.3 Existing Capacity and Adequacy Analysis

In its simplest form, the capacity of a school can be calculated by multiplying the number of classrooms or teaching spaces by a number of pupils to be accommodated in each classroom. Capacity is a variable however, not a fixed number. An elementary school constructed years ago can no longer accommodate as many pupils as it once did. New statutory and code requirements, changes in programs, increased need for special education, demands for specialized facilities and teacher contract limits are among the factors that affect the capacity of a school building. Class size policies alone can increase or decrease a school's capacity by 20% or more.

Although a detailed capacity analysis was performed on each facility using varying criterion, Gilbane/RGB determined, for the purpose of developing a realistic master plan, that the school system would be analyzed using the proposed NESDEC "optimal capacity" or "preferred capacity" utilizing the education policy and program criteria established by the North Smithfield School Department. The established class size goals as recommended by the NESDEC report are 18 students to each Kindergarten and First Grade classroom, 22 students to each elementary and secondary classroom, and 24 for each high school classroom, as a target for current optimal educational program delivery. These class sizes correspond with current national educational trends, and although slightly higher than "No Child Left Behind" guidelines (at 18 students for each Kindergarten through Third Grade classroom, and 20 students per classroom in grades Four through Six), they still strive for much more manageable class sizes than currently exist. The capacity and adequacy analysis also examines each of the following space types and addresses current educational program deficiencies and facility shortfalls.

- Classrooms
- Allied and Unified Arts
- Physical Education and Assembly
- Student Support and Administration.

North Smithfield is served by three schools and a School Administration Building. The schools operate on a K-6 elementary and 7-12 junior-senior high school program. The two elementary schools have a combined present capacity (enrollment) of 1,067 students. The Junior-Senior

High School has a capacity (enrollment) of 845. The following is a summary of existing school facilities:

Kendall-Dean School - Greene Street

Built: 1936
Site: 3.5 acres
Grades: not applicable
Classrooms: not applicable
2003 Enrollment: not applicable
Capacity: not applicable

** Has been decommissioned as a school facility and currently houses the school districts administrative function.

Halliwell School - Great Road (Route 146A)

Built: 1957/1961 addition
Site: 38 acres
Grades: Part of grades 4 and all of grades 5 and 6.
Classrooms: 18
2003 Enrollment: 407
Capacity: 17 @ 25 = 425

North Smithfield Elementary School - Providence Pike

Built: 1989/2001 addition
Site: 40 acres (18 School Dept and 22 retained by Town)
Grades: Grades 1-3, some 4, Kindergarten & Pre-K
Classrooms: 22 regular
2003 Enrollment: 660
Capacity: 713 (based on original design, not current standards)

North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School - Greenville Road

Built: 1966
Site: 36 acres
Grades: 7 through 12
Classrooms: 25 (includes 2 computer labs and Special Ed office)
2003 Enrollment: 845
Capacity: 686 (based on original design, not current standards)

The 2004 Gilbane/RGB *Comprehensive School Facilities Master Plan* describes each of these buildings/complexes in great detail.

Using an optimal reduced class size (preferred capacity) of 18 students per classroom in First Grade, and 22 students per classroom in Grades 2-8, as recommended in the NESDEC report, based on a current Grade 1-6 enrollment of 884, establishes that both existing elementary schools are currently over capacity by approximately 36 students. North Smithfield Elementary would be able to accommodate 528 elementary students based on “old” RIDE minimum area

regulations, or 456 students based on NESDEC reduced class size standards. Halliwell's current capacity is established at 392 students using the "old" minimum area regulations, or at 396 students, using 22 students per classroom. (It should be noted that the NESDEC report set the preferred capacity at only 330 students, accounting for current facility shortfalls and educational program deficiencies.)

Using the preferred capacity at each school gives a total elementary capacity of 848 students (456 + 392) grades 1 – 6. Five year NESDEC projections indicate that Grade 1 – 6 enrollment will increase by approximately 35 students by the 2008/09 school year. This increase would put both schools approximately 71 students over capacity, and would require the addition of a minimum of three additional elementary classrooms to strive for the NESDEC recommended reduced average class sizes indicated above.

The Jr./Sr. High School currently houses grades 7 – 12 consisting of a current total enrollment of 845 students. The capacity of the facility has been established at 690 students, making the facility currently 155 students over capacity. Five year trends show continued growth within the 7 – 12 grade grouping, adding approximately 96 students by the 2008/09 school year and increasing to a predicted enrollment of 130 students attending the facility by the 2012/13.

H-3.2 Inventory of Town Administration

Three buildings provide space for the administration of town services. They are the Town Hall, the Municipal Annex, and the Public Works Garage.

H-3.2.1 Town Hall

Located at the intersection of North Main and Main Streets in Slatersville, the Town Hall has an elevated site overlooking the Branch River. The fairly recent removal of the Clerks Office, Tax Assessor's Office, Tax Collector and Recreation Department to the Municipal Annex has relieved some of the pressure on the building but has not solved some of the basic problems of office space limitations, limited parking and lack of handicapped access.

Current usage by floor is as follows: second floor (has ground level access at rear of building) - Planning, Building and Zoning; and third floor Town Administrator, Finance Director and staff.

Over the years, various proposals for creating a new municipal center have been considered and rejected, however there may be an opportunity to revisit this issue with the proposed redevelopment of the Slatersville Mill or the decommissioning of the Kendall Dean School.

The Town Hall is located within the Slatersville Historic District listed in the State and Federal Registers of Historic Places.

H-3.2.2 Municipal Annex

The Municipal Annex is located in the former Bushee School on Route 146A near Park Square approximately three miles south of the Town Hall. Originally constructed in 1926, with an addition in 1935, the early 90's conversion to municipal use has provided a modernized facility with parking in the rear and side for municipal users and parking in the front for police purposes. The site covers 2 acres.

Present occupants include the Police Department, Clerks Office, Tax Assessor's Office, Tax Collector and Recreation Department and the Town's Emergency Operations Center. There is a large meeting room on the lower level used for meetings of the Town Council and other boards and agencies. This meeting room needs HVAC improvements and parking is tight during well attended public meetings.

Other than record storage space, all present users have very adequate space allocations. The expected conversion of the Clerks Office to a paperless recording system will help alleviate the shortage of storage space. The Emergency Management Agency's facilities on the lower level include a communications center, kitchen, office, storage room, showers, and a shelter hall (the large meeting room referred to in the preceding paragraph).

The main drawback to the present facility is the split nature of municipal management; there are some inefficiencies in traveling between the Town Hall and Municipal Annex for matters that cannot be handled by a phone call or e-mail. The public is often inconvenienced by mistakenly going to the wrong facility.

H-3.2.3 Public Works Garage

The Public Works Garage is located on a 3.5 acre site at 281 Quaker Highway adjoining the Uxbridge, Massachusetts Town and State line. Although situated far from a convenient central location, this is a good area in terms of the facility's not being an adverse influence on properties either in North Smithfield or Uxbridge.

The Public Works Department's responsibilities cover highway maintenance and construction, inspections, and parks and recreation. The garage has six bays used for the storage of Public Works vehicles and equipment and repair of police and other Town vehicles. There is a partially enclosed salt storage shed on the site. A recent addition to the facility included office space and a record storage area. The site also functions as a limited recycling center where Town residents can bring their waste oil to the Waste Oil Igloo and yard waste to a dumpster that is periodically shipped to Smithfield Peat for composting.

The Water and Sewer Department is housed in a 40' x 60' two bay building on Main Street. This building provides storage for the Department's vehicles, equipment and has a small office for the Superintendent.

The North Smithfield Animal Shelter and an animal crematorium are located behind the garage.

H-3.3 Police Department

The North Smithfield Police Department is located in an efficiently designed space at the Municipal Annex. Two lock-up cells are sufficient for normal conditions. The staff includes the Chief, 20 officers and 4 civilian employees. There are twelve vehicles, and one van assigned to the Animal Control Officer. The cars are fueled and maintained at the Public Works Garage. Fine tuning is done by a private garage as the Town does not have a computer diagnostic facility. For police protection purposes, the Town has been divided into three districts. There is ample onsite parking; all is uncovered.

The Police Department received National Accreditation in Spring 2005 following 2 years of review. The application process is evidence of the Department's pursuit of excellence and willingness to subject itself to standards that will help measure performance and effectiveness. Accountability to itself and the community is at the heart of the accreditation process as administered by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). Accreditation requires compliance with existing and new requirements as well as is the submission of annual reports to CALEA.

H-3.4 Fire Protection and Rescue Services

After years of discussion and study about the need for a municipal fire department, consensus was reached that a municipal department would best serve the Town and preparations for that conversion are nearly complete. The first step which was recently completed, was the merger of the North Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department, Primrose Fire Department and the North Smithfield Ambulance and Rescue Association to form North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Services, Inc. (NSFRS) which provides fire and rescue services to the entire Town.

Until the municipalization is complete, the NSFRS will operate as a non-profit organization receiving the bulk of its income through annual contracts with the Town. Supplemental financing is provided through periodic fund raisers and third party billing. Most of the major equipment has been purchased by the Town and is leased to the NSFRS. The fire stations are independently owned by the NSFRS.

NSFRS has two stations. Station #1 is located on St. Paul Street at the intersection with Route 146A is convenient to the more urbanized sections of Town and Station #2 is located on Providence Pike to the north of Greenville Road, is situated to serve the more rural areas. Dispatching is handled at the North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Station #1. NSFRS has 21 full-time employees and 15 volunteers. The amount and expense of training required for certification of volunteer fire fighters and Emergency Medical Technicians has resulted in a reduction in the number of volunteers.

Some current deficiencies include long runs to reach the southeast sections of Town near the Sayles Hill Road/146 intersection and new development off of Log Road that can only be approached by a circuitous route passing through sections of Burrillville. The Sayles Hill Road

section is serviced, in part, under a mutual aid agreement with the Manville Fire Department in Lincoln.

The facilities at each fire station are as follows: (Town-owned unless otherwise indicated.)

Station #1 St. Paul Street

Built: 1937
Site: 3.7 acres - portion leased to restaurant
Building: 5,700 sq. ft.
Vehicles: 2000 HME Pumper
1982 Continental Tanker
14' Rescue Boat & Trailer (Dept. Owned)
1990 Brush Truck
1994 Horton/International Rescue

Ford Blue Star Rescue (Spare)

Station #2 Providence Pike

Built: 1960
Site: 0.75 acres
Building: 7,100 sq. ft.
Vehicles: 1996 Smeal/International Ladder
1990 Pumper
1963 White Tanker (Dept. Owned)
2002 International Pumper
2006 Road Rescue/ International/Osage
1997 Ford Explorer (Dept. Owned)
2004 GMC Envoy (Dept. Owned)
14' Rescue Boat & Trailer (Dept. Owned)

Another deficiency is the lack of a comprehensive fire suppression system stemming from the limited coverage of municipal water. Although only about 30 percent of the Town is served by community water systems, many of the areas, with the exception of the Industrial Park service area, have inadequate flows in terms of standards set by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) which tested the system in 1983. New developments above a certain size that are located outside of a municipal water district are required to provide fire suppression cisterns.

The Town of Smithfield's Hazardous and Emergency Spill Response Team is available to North Smithfield through a mutual aid agreement as well as a regional compact with nine other Northern Rhode Island communities covering hazardous and emergency spill responses.

H-3.5 Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management

The North Smithfield Office of Emergency Management operates from the Emergency Operating Center located in the Public Safety Center at the Municipal Annex (575 Smithfield

Road). The Department consists of a Director, Deputy Director and 20 sworn Emergency Management Officers all who are volunteers. The Department is responsible by ordinance for the coordination and planning for both natural and man made disasters. Volunteers under the Community Emergency Response Team are trained in many different areas of emergency services work and in the techniques of disaster recovery and search and rescue. Members include amateur radio, citizens band radio, licensed general mobile radio service GMRS and Landmobile radio operators. A special REACTION team aids local authorities in traffic and crowd control.

Many recommended land management techniques, capital improvements, “hazard proofing” and other aspects of emergency mitigation have been incorporated into the other elements of this plan. These elements are discussed in greater detail in the *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The *Hazard Mitigation Plan* was adopted by North Smithfield’s Council on November 8, 2004 and is included, as the Plan requires, in the Appendix of this Updated Comprehensive Plan.

The Town presently has seven local warning system sirens. As new development takes place the system should be upgraded, especially in high density population areas and more remote sections of the community. Plans for any multifamily housing, especially elderly housing development, should include operable emergency power equipment. Additionally, operable emergency power equipment may be a necessary capital improvement to the Slatersville-Forestdale Water System and may be required as part of any development review process, especially if the development proposal involves multi-family housing, including elderly housing. Regular inspection of the many dams, bridges and culverts is also recommended.

H-3.6 Library Service

The North Smithfield Public Library, a 501c Non-Profit Corporation, operates under a fifteen member Board of Trustees. The operating budget is funded by an annual appropriation from the Town of North Smithfield, matched by 25% state grant-in-aid, when minimum state standards are met.

The Library is located at the intersection of Main Street and Providence Pike in a renovated stone mill structure, the John Slater building, situated on a 2.2 acre sloping site overlooking the Branch River and Centennial Park. Parking is provided for 31 vehicles. Planned in 1985 for twenty years of service, the current 6,985 square foot facility expansion project was completed in 1989 before the computer revolution.

Although not located near the geographical center of Town, the Library is convenient to some of the more urbanized neighborhoods. In conjunction with the adjacent Slatersville Post Office and the nearby Town Hall and Pacheco Park, it helps to define a civic center for North Smithfield. The building has been sensitively designed to reflect the historic character of the surrounding Slatersville Historic District.

With the current Library at capacity, library officials anticipate a new energy efficient facility of sufficient size and layout to accommodate the growing demands of the library community.

Identified needs include larger assembly space, study carrels, computer lab, young adult area, expanded storage for media collections, materials and supplies, office space, and staff lunch room and lockers. There have been preliminary discussions with the developer of the Slater Mill about possible conversion of the power house building with an addition to a library facility.

The building's 40,000 volume initial capacity has been enhanced by electronic compact shelving, which relieves storage in the stacks on the western end of the library. Shelving in media, juvenile and primary departments are cramped. The collection currently stands at 52,165 items. Circulation in FY03 was 68,521 plus interlibrary loan traffic of 20,223.

H-3.7 Animal Shelter

The North Smithfield Animal Shelter, along with an animal crematorium, is located behind the Public Works Garage. Renovation of the Shelter in 1997 included a 28' x 28' addition with a reception area, office space, separate cat room, quarantine room, and food storage areas. The well has been contaminated by salt; bottled water must be brought in.

On weekdays, the dogs are cared for by the Town's Animal Control Officer. Volunteer Services for Animals cares for the cats throughout the week and the dogs on weekends at no cost to the Town. This volunteer organization also runs the Lost and Found, Pet Adoption and Return-to-Owners programs.

H-3.8 Senior Center

The Town of North Smithfield does not have a facility dedicated to senior citizens. There is an active seniors organization which holds weekly meetings at St. John's Church Hall. Periodic day and overnight trips also are organized.

According to the US Census, in the year 2000, 18% of North Smithfield's population was over the age of 65. Only three other municipalities in Rhode Island have a larger percentage of seniors. Given that the senior population has grown by 47% between 1990 and 2000, seniors are living longer and enjoy more active and independent lifestyles, and that many of the proposed and permitted new multi-family units will be age-restricted to people over 55, it must be anticipated that requests for services to seniors will be increasing.

H-3.9 Solid Waste Disposal

Solid waste collection and disposal is handled under annual contracts with private operators who remove the waste to disposal sites outside of North Smithfield.

Under the direction of a part-time Recycling Coordinator, a Town-wide recycling program was initiated in October 1990. Currently, glass, aluminum, paper and newspapers are being collected for recycling. Weekly large item pick-up and seasonal yard waste disposal are services provided under the current contract.

H-3.10 Water Supply

Water is supplied to the Town's residences and businesses by a combination of individual wells and community systems. Currently, about 70 percent of the population is served by individual onsite wells and 30 percent are tied into a community water system.

There are three community water systems. These were evaluated in a 1990 *Report on Water System Master Plan* prepared by Weston and Sampson Engineers and a 1992 *Water Supply Study* prepared by Maguire Group, Inc. Recent efforts by the Department of Health, in conjunction with the University of Rhode Island, have also resulted in analyses and production of handouts that help summarize the various systems providing water and how residents of the community can participate in their protection.

The systems are as follows: the municipally-owned Slatersville Water Company operated by the Town and which uses three wells to serve about 266 services in the Slatersville and Forestdale neighborhoods¹; the City of Woonsocket water system providing service to 560 services in Union Village and adjoining development and in the Mendon Road/Rhodes Avenue area; and the Town of Blackstone Water System serving 42 services in the Waterford neighborhood. The approximate limits of the service areas are shown on Map H - 1, Water Service Areas. As previously noted in the discussion of fire protection, there are serious fire flow deficiencies in all but the former Industrial Park service area.

As stated in the 2004 USGS report that delineates areas contributing recharge to selected public water supply wells, "Accurate delineation of areas contributing recharge to public-supply wells is an essential component of State, local and Federal strategies for the protection of drinking-water supplies from contamination." Delineation of the current recharge area of the Tiffit well, pumping at 200 gallons per minute and the proposed 500 gallons per minute suggest contamination from the nearby landfill will not be drawn into the water supply. However, installation of other wells in the vicinity may affect USGS's modeling efforts and therefore such studies continue to be necessary to better understand the capabilities of existing and future wells and how best to protect them.

The Town recognizes that it has a fragmented water supply system that is having difficulty meeting the needs of its current users. The system will not be able to meet the needs of future development without improving its existing partnerships, investment in its infrastructure and better internal management of the system. Several options for a phased program to consolidate the systems into a North Smithfield water system were recommended by Weston and Sampson and Maguire plans. The estimated 1990 costs prepared by Weston and Sampson by phase are as follows: Phase I (1990 - 1995) \$2,350,000; Phase II (1996-2000) \$3,700,000; and Phase III (2001-2010) \$2,700,000. The first three phases essentially would consolidate and make improvements to serve properties within and adjacent to the existing service areas. Approximately 10 million in capital costs were projected by Maguire for a similar three phase upgrade and consolidation of the systems (see Map H-2.) Portions of this phased program of

¹ The Slatersville water company obtained the assets of the Industrial Park Water Company, Inc.

improvements have already been implemented including extension of the 12 inch water main from School Street along Great Road just short of Mendon Road. Final engineering and a municipal agreement for the Mendon Road water interconnect are nearly complete. Completion of the interconnect is anticipated in the summer of 2005.

The North Smithfield Water Authority (NSWA) was formed in 1993 by the Rhode Island Legislature. Although recently disbanded, the NSWA had the powers of condemnation, rate setting and authority to issue bonds and notes. While it was structured as an advisory board to the Town Council with the intention of transferring the Slatersville Water Company to the Water Authority, the Council wished to play a greater role in decision-making and improve the organization’s accountability. The NSWA adopted a Strategic Business Plan in 2001 that utilizes the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis to assess the system and develop goals and strategies for the system. The overall vision of the plan is that the Town will own and operate a system that, with planned improvements, will have ample sources of water and an integrated distribution system supported by a reasonable water rate structure.

H-3.11 Wastewater Management

Wastewater generated by the Town is serviced by the Woonsocket Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Town of North Smithfield entered into an agreement with Woonsocket in 1997 for the treatment and disposal of wastewater generated by the Town. The agreement indicates that the cost disbursement for capital expenses are proportioned based on percentages of total design flow. Operating costs including maintenance, repairs, supplies and administration are based upon the actual metered flow from the Alice Avenue Metering Station and water usage records for units that do not pass through the metering station, and are then proportioned based on the total flow treated by the Facility.

Map H - 3 shows the limits of sewer service in North Smithfield including the several streets to be added as a result of the \$2,500,000 bond issue for sewer improvements approved in November 1990. Proposed sewer extensions as described in detail in the 1993 *Facilities Plan for Wastewater Management in the Town of North Smithfield* are as follows:

Victory Highway #2	Lamoureux Blvd
Ironstone	Waterford
Great Road	Providence Pike Area 1
St. Paul Street	Willerval & Tanglewood
NS Industrial Park	Providence Pike Area 2
Great Road (Dawley Brook)	Park View
Sayles Area	Main Street
Victory Highway #1	

The Town has commenced with identification of priority projects ranked by RIDEM's Division of Water Resources. Utilization of the State Revolving Fund (SRF) program via the Rhode

Island Water Protection Finance Agency is planned for additional projects targeted by the Sewer Commission. These prioritized projects continue to be assessed and updated annually.

Through a system of collector sewers and several pumping stations, wastewater flows to the Cherry Brook Interceptor and the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Facility. North Smithfield may send up to 3.9 million gallons per day (mgd) to Woonsocket for treatment. Present flows are about 0.5 mgd. The relatively low flow in the system has created a number of operating problems; the interceptor is designed to carry 7.5 mgd.

The 1993 long-range plan, prepared by Travassos-Geremia and Associates, for expanding sewer services is shown on Map H-5 from the *Facilities Plan for Wastewater Management*. The study assumed that by 2010, a population of 8,883 would receive sewer services. The increased flow from areas to be sewerred by 2010, at buildout, is estimated to increase North Smithfield's average daily flow into the Woonsocket facility to 1.71 mgd or, slightly more than half of its design flow capacity.

Discussions with local and State (RIDEM) officials and engineers familiar with North Smithfield have identified additional areas having problems with onsite septic systems; these too are shown on Map H - 3. However, this should not be considered a comprehensive evaluation of sewer needs and problem areas. That must be the subject of a separate engineering study. According to Save the Bay, individual septic systems in Rhode Island fail at a rate of approximately 13 percent per year.

While the existing sewer system is not extensive, and can be considered a constraint, there is the treatment capacity in Woonsocket to handle additional flows from North Smithfield. Such flows could serve existing needs areas as well as sites proposed to attract tax base-beneficial development to North Smithfield. The completion of the upgrade of the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment facility may increase its capacity from 16 to 20 mgd and could open up an opportunity for North Smithfield to increase its flow reservation.

Areas not on sewers have onsite individual sewage disposal systems for wastewater disposal. Although there are guidelines for property owner maintenance of these systems, most are serviced only when there are problems. Private septage haulers must be engaged to pump out the septic tank; the resulting septage is emptied into sludge disposal facilities at the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Facility or other similar facilities in the region. A Wastewater Management District involving the regular inspection and maintenance of septic systems is discussed elsewhere in this Update.

H-4.0 The Plan

Map H - 4, Services and Facilities Plan, shows the location of existing and proposed public facilities as described in the sections which follow. This Plan does not cover equipment needs which are addressed on an annual basis as part of the Town' Capital Budget Program.

H-4.1 School Facilities

In light of the data presented, the seven main options are identified below. Six are simply listed and the seventh, preferred option, is discussed in some detail. All options are described in great detail within the body of the Gilbane/RGB report.

- Option 1: Renovate Existing Elementary Schools (reconfigure NSES and Halliwell), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 2: Renovate Existing Elementary Schools (reconfigure only Halliwell), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 3: Build New Elementary School, Build “Jr. High” Addition on High School
- Option 4: Expand Kendall-Dean Elementary School, Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 5: Expand Kendall-Dean Elementary School *and* NSES (to serve some additional Kindergarten children), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 6: Expand Kendall-Dean Elementary School *and* NSES (to serve all Pre-K and Kindergarten children), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School

Option 7: Build New Elementary School, Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School

Taking the advantages and disadvantages of each of the previous six schemes into consideration, the resulting favored option, Option 7 of the RGB/Gilbane report received unanimous agreement of the Task Force and Town Council, has resulted in proposing a multi-year phased master plan that will address all of the current space and educational program shortfalls, and provides a “roadmap” for the district to follow to bring its educational facilities back into compliance with current educational standards. The first proposed phase involves the construction of a new middle school.

A new 550 student Middle School would provide grade appropriate grouping of students for Grades 6-8, and would free up space at the elementary school level, by removing grade six from the elementary school mix. The construction of a new middle school would have an impact to the existing Jr. / Sr. High School, by removing Grades 7 and 8 from the High School. Consisting of approximately 310 students, the existing High School would come back within capacity, with ample room for growth. While the master plan recommends renovations and additions to the existing high school facility to meet long-term educational program and facility improvement goals, the proposed work would be the last piece of the plan. As indicated previously, the construction of a new 550 student middle school resolves capacity issues as well as long-term growth at both the middle school and high school levels providing for approximately 60 additional students at the middle school level and 60 additional students at the high school level.

The second proposed phase of the master plan calls for the construction of a new 400 student elementary school on the existing Halliwell site to resolve existing capacity issues at the elementary grades, as well as providing for future long term growth at the elementary level.

Based on the detailed analysis contained in the Planning Options section of the RGB/Gilbane report, the proposed new elementary school would be designed initially for 15 general classrooms, three kindergarten classrooms and one additional Pre K classroom to meet any long-term Kindergarten and Pre K growth needs. Since the District has been analyzed using worst case five year capacity trends, there is an additional capacity between 18 and 30 students at the Pre K / Kindergarten level (one additional pre-K room being used by two ½ day sessions or a swing kindergarten room used to keep class sized down and allow for fluctuating enrollment), and approximately an additional 40 total students at the Grade 1-5 level to allow for some short term grade fluctuations and future long-term growth between the two elementary schools. The proposed elementary school would be designed as a two level structure to minimize initial site development footprint and to more easily allow for any future expansion of the facility on the Halliwell site.

H-4.2 Other Public Buildings and Services

Town Hall

The Town Hall requires structural, functional and utilities modernization. Equally important is the need to eliminate overcrowding. A feasibility and needs assessment should be conducted in conjunction with the proposals of the Natural and Cultural Resources Element to evaluate the adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings in the Slatersville Historic District and especially within the mill complex itself.

Public Works Garage

This facility should be continued and expanded as necessary. A space needs and engineering study, as approved, should be conducted.

Municipal Annex

The most cost-effective options for repairs, handicapped accessibility and more efficient use of space should be implemented as soon as possible.

Police Department

A long-range need is the addition of an enclosed garage which will allow a more secure and safer transfer of prisoners from a police car to detention facilities in the building. Future consolidation of municipal functions to a new building will enable the police department to fully occupy the Annex and eliminate security concerns.

Emergency Management Agency

Expansion and upgrading of emergency warning systems as well as computerization of civil defense records are priorities for the Agency. Further integration with other Town emergency services also is targeted.

H-4.3 Fire Protection and Rescue Services

Continue efforts to form a municipal fire and rescue department.

Major expense items are the replacement of fire protection and rescue service vehicles as they age and become obsolete. Continue to require fire protection cisterns in new subdivisions outside of municipal water service areas.

There is no recommendation for a new fire station in the southeast section of North Smithfield which is at some distance from the Town's fire services. Efforts should be directed at improving the mutual-aid agreement with the Manville Fire Department in Lincoln. As noted in the Goals, Policies and Actions section of this Element, regional solutions, because of their potential for reducing municipal costs, should be pursued whenever possible. Interestingly, while respondents of the 2001 Community Survey indicated their satisfaction with Fire Services, of the many services provided by the Town, respondents suggested that only improvements to fire protection and water supply should be financed

H-4.4 Library

While the existing library is in a beautiful and well-located building, it is simply too small and can not be further expanded as is necessary in its present location. A new library is needed.

H-4.5 Animal Shelter

The Animal Shelter was upgraded in 1997 and is currently sufficiently sized.

H-4.6 Water Supply

The recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan are premised upon water and sewer services being supportive of Element D, Land Use Plan. Extensions of water utilities inconsistent with the Land Use Plan should not be allowed except where public health and safety concerns need to be addressed. Respondents to the 2001 Community Survey were most dissatisfied with the water and sewer systems in Town. However, when asked whether they would support the financing of improvements, the majority (52%) indicated that only improvements to the water system should be funded.

The current recommendations include:

- Develop a new high yield Tifft Road Well on the Tifft Road site in order to provide public water to newly permitted/approved development and to better address fire protection needs.
- Finalize negotiations with the City of Woonsocket as a means of supplementing North Smithfield's water supply.
- Implement the "Mendon Road Water Interconnection Project", under discussion, in order to serve residents in the Waterford area currently served by the Town of Blackstone, MA.
- Improve relationships between partners.
- Improve the metering and billing system.

H-4.7 Wastewater Management/Watershed Protection

The recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan are premised upon water and sewer services being supportive of Element D, Land Use. Extensions of sewers inconsistent with the Land Use should not be allowed except where public health and safety concerns need to be addressed.

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1992, North Smithfield prepared (May 1993) a *Facilities Plan for Wastewater Management*. Map H-5 in this Comprehensive Plan shows the areas to be served by sewers to support the Land Use Element and address public health issues.

The *Wastewater Facilities Plan*:

- Identifies those areas where sewers are needed to prevent pollution, serve economic development and can accommodate affordable housing development.
- Relates sewerage to the other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan with special consideration to the Land Use Plan Element, the Housing Element, the Economic Development and the Natural and Cultural Resources Element.
- Identifies areas where the establishment of Wastewater Management Districts would be the most cost-effective and environmentally sound for problem locations and those areas with aquifer recharge and surface drainage to public water supply resources.
- Discusses whether North Smithfield should, or needs to, increase its flow reservation at the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Facility, if additional capacity become available.

The *Wastewater Facilities Plan* needs to be updated.

H-4.8 Senior Center

As part of suggested adaptive reuse studies for the Slatersville Mill complex, evaluate the desirability of establishing a Senior Center.

Seniors should be considered as a special resource to use as major participants in and organizers of North Smithfield's efforts to implement the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor*.

H-4.9 Regionalization of Public Services

Increasingly, communities are exploring regional options for the most efficient and cost-effective delivery of public services. As discussed in the preceding sections, many services such as sewers, water supply and fire protection are dependent wholly or in part on cooperation with other municipalities.

Many aspects of regionalization can also apply to municipal management. For example, throughout the United States many smaller towns have developed joint purchasing arrangements.

The Town's Capital Budget Program should require investigation of regional options for certain categories of municipal expenditures.

H-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Services and Facilities Element supports the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with relevant State Guide Plan Elements.

The following is a summary of the relationship of the Services and Facilities Element to State Goals and Policies:

State Guide Plan Element 131, *State Land Use Policies and Plan 2010*

The management and development of water resources in a coordinated and efficient manner is proposed. The level of development is related to the level of services.

State Guide Plan Element 110, *Goals and Policies*

Expansion of sewer services and the use of Wastewater Management Districts are proposed to eliminate water pollution.

Continued improvement of educational facilities will support a contemporary educational program in North Smithfield schools.

Regional solutions are proposed for all public facilities wherever possible.

State Guide Plan Element 711, *Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan*

Sewer services will be limited to areas of higher densities. Generally, lots of 1 1/2 acres or larger will be served by private wells and individual subsurface disposal systems.

State Guide Plan Element 721, *Water Supply Policies of Rhode Island*

Access to surface water reservoirs is prohibited in accordance with the State Guide Plan.

The Town has partnered with the local Watershed Councils (as is discussed in greater detail in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element of this Comprehensive Plan) to help protect the water supply.

The Town continues to improve its water supply systems and infrastructure and search for regional solutions towards meeting water needs.

Some large lot zoning remains, and is proposed, to specifically protect individual wells and reservoirs.

State Guide Plan Element 722, *Water Supply Plan for Rhode Island*

North Smithfield is pursuing its water resource needs through regional and interstate cooperation.