

# Municipal Facilities and Utilities

# 8

## 1. Introduction

This chapter examines municipal services from the perspective of capital facilities and equipment needs. The facilities examined in this evaluation include the town offices/town hall, public works, solid waste, library, fire and rescue, police, and schools. A section is also included that examines the town's fiscal trends over the last few years with regard to revenues, expenditures and capital investment. Information has also been included pertaining to the municipal water system and other public utility systems.

The focus of this analysis is on the various building and equipment needs required to service existing and projected demands for municipal services. Staffing levels, however, are also discussed. Much of the information presented in this chapter was obtained through interviews with town department heads. Where previous facilities' analyses have been completed, information from such studies have also been included.

## 2. Summary of Major Findings and Conclusions

- Gray is presently confronted with the need to upgrade, expand or reconstruct many of its municipal and school buildings. These needs are attributable in part to growth within the community and to deferred capital investment in the past.
- A number of the potential facility improvements being considered involve decisions that will affect multiple town and school buildings. This makes it particularly important that the town pursue a realistic and comprehensive approach to capital facilities planning.

- The town has initiated a formalized capital investment program that will extend the fiscal impacts of capital costs over a longer period of time and make expenditures more predictable.
- The town office building has insufficient office and storage space to support existing staffing levels and demand for service. Stimpson Hall is an adequate facility for most municipal board meetings, but does not provide suitable space for larger public gatherings and community events.
- The public works garage and recycling building are probably approaching the end of their usefulness due to physical and economic obsolescence.
- The library is in good condition from a structural standpoint, but is strained from a space needs perspective.
- The Fire Department's Central Station is in good condition but has inadequate space to serve the needs of the department. Although the department's Village and Dry Mills sub-stations provide useful storage, the facilities are functionally obsolete and should probably be considered for replacement in the future.
- The town has reached a level of development that may warrant consideration of expanded police services beyond the current reliance on County and State police services.
- The town and school district are facing a decision of either making major investment in two elementary school facilities or the potential alternative of consolidating its three neighborhood schools into two.

### **3. Town Offices and Stimpson Hall**

The town office building and Stimpson Memorial Hall house the town's administrative functions and community meeting space facilities. These two buildings are located on a one acre parcel of land on Shaker Road near the center of the Village. The site contains 45 parking spaces that service both buildings.

The town office building is a two story structure containing approximately 2,300 square feet of space. The upper level of the building provides office and administrative space for the Town Manager, Tax Collector/Finance, and Town Clerk functions as well as lobby space and public restrooms. The lower level contains the offices of Planning, Code Enforcement, and Assessing. Staffing within all of these departments currently totals 10 full-time personnel.

Stimpson Memorial Hall is a two story structure that was constructed in 1900 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The main floor of the building is an auditorium type space with a raised stage which can accommodate approximately 150 people. This area is presently used for

Town Council meetings, other town and school board meetings, and by other various civic groups. The basement of the building is finished and includes a smaller meeting room as well as the broadcast facilities of the local cable access television channel. The upper floor of the building is currently not useable since insulation has been added to address energy efficiency issues. The building is estimated to contain approximately 4,000 to 5,000 square feet of space on the main floor (including the stage area) and basement level.

Needs Assessment - Overall, the town office building appears to be in relatively good condition, but is only partially compliant with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements. However, from a space needs perspective the structure is undersized to support existing staffing levels and increasing records storage requirements. A recently completed space needs analysis indicates that, based on state standards used by the Buildings and Services Division, a facility of 4,500 to 5,500 square feet is required to serve the existing needs of the town's administrative departments and allow for 25% expansion that may be required to accommodate future growth.

Two options are currently being considered to address the deficiencies in the town office building. The first is expansion of the existing building through annexation of the adjacent (and presently vacant) post office building. Preliminary plans developed for the town indicates that the two buildings could be connected in a suitable fashion which would add 1,800 to 2,000 square feet of space to the existing town office facilities. It is likely that some parking spaces would be lost as a result of this expansion, but there should still be an adequate number of spaces remaining for normal demand. The estimated cost to undertake this alternative is just under \$1.0 million.

The second alternative being considered is the acquisition and renovation of the Pennell Institute building located on Main Street in the Village. The building is owned by the regional school district and it presently houses the district's special education and continuing education programs, as well as the town Historical Society's museum collections. This structure, which is part of a complex of buildings and athletic fields shared with the town's Parks and Recreation Department, was built in 1876 and is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

The historic portion of the Institute building is a two story brick structure, to which a contemporary single story addition has been attached. The new addition and the first floor of the original structure contain classroom and administrative space for the school district's programs. The Historical Society's facilities are located on the second floor of the original structure. The entire structure is estimated to contain approximately 7,000 square feet of space.

The school district is currently considering vacating the building as part of a reassessment of all district facilities. If this occurs the building would be turned over to the town for municipal use. Preliminary estimates to renovate the structure for use as a town office facility are approximately \$1.0 million. This would allow all existing functions at the current town offices to be relocated to this building and also provide space for the Parks and Recreation Director, who presently has an office in the recreation maintenance building. Conversion of this building to town offices may

eventually result in the relocation of the Historical Society as the town's administrative space demands increase in the future. Conversion of the building may also necessitate the installation of an elevator as well as other improvements to comply with ADA requirements. In addition, existing parking lots and traffic circulation on the Pennell property and adjoining recreation facilities at Newbegin Hall will need to be reconfigured and upgraded if the building is converted for use as town offices.

Stimpson Hall provides a centrally located meeting space for the community but has issues that need to be considered. These include bringing the building into compliance with ADA requirements that necessitate the installation of a restroom on the main floor and an upgraded ramp and vestibule at the entrance. Consideration may also have to be given to installing an elevator for access to the lower level. Aside from these issues the building needs an upgraded heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system and other improvements to make it more energy efficient.

From a staffing perspective the Town Manager feels that the Code Enforcement department should have two (2) full-time personnel in order to address current demands for inspections. Aside from this, staffing levels are adequate to meet the town's needs for the immediate future.

#### **4. Library**

The Gray Public Library is located on Skilling Street in the Village just a few blocks from the main square. The building was constructed in the 1930s and originally functioned as a school house (the Hancock School). An addition was constructed in 1988 which added approximately 2,200 square feet of space bringing the existing building area to almost 4,800 square feet. The building is located on a 1.6 acre parcel of land which has parking for 17 vehicles.

The library is a single story structure with an unfinished basement area. The main floor of the structure is divided into five primary functional areas. The original portion of the building contains the public access computer terminal area, the reference collection area, and a small reading room that was created in 2002. The new addition houses the children's area, shelving for the library's main book and audio/visual collection, and the circulation desk/staff work area. The basement area is used by the Friends of the Gray Public Library to store books which are used in the annual book sales to raise money for the library. The basement also contains the building's mechanical systems.

The library has approximately 30,000 items in its collection and an average annual circulation of about 56,000 items. Approximately 1,500 to 2,000 new items are added to the library's collection annually. There are currently 7,160 registered users of the library, a figure that increased by 9% during 2002. Circulation increased by 20% over the past year.

The library has eight (8) public access computer terminals which offer high-speed access to the Internet. According to the Library Director, computer usage is the fastest growing service provided by the library with a current average of 3,000 users annually. The facility is expected to be linked

to the state's card catalogue by February 2003, which will allow inter-loan book requests to be made on-line from the library or from remote terminals.

Current staffing at the library includes two (2) full-time personnel, which includes the Library Director, and two (2) part-time personnel who work a combined 40 hour week. With this level of staffing the library is opened to the public 37 hours per week.

Needs Assessment - According to the Library Director, the overall physical condition of the library is very good. However, all available space is currently being used to its maximum extent which limits the ability to add new and updated information to the library's collection. In an effort to address this and other issues, the library's Long Range Planning Committee initiated a two year planning process to assess the needs of the facility over the next 25 years. The Committee wrote a successfully funded grant application to the state which financed the hiring of a consultant to prepare a facilities assessment report. According to the draft report, the consultant has recommended construction of a 4,800 square foot addition within the next 5 to 7 years. Aside from an increase in shelf space, this addition would allow for the creation of a new young adult area (which is not currently available), expansion of the children's area to include space for crafts, upgraded and enlarged audio/visual facilities, and an expansion of the reading room. The estimated cost of this facilities upgrade is approximately \$1.2 million.

Another building consideration currently being evaluated involves finishing off a portion of the basement, approximately 900 square feet, for use by the Friends of the Library. This area would include meeting space as well as a kitchen and restrooms. Estimated cost of the project is approximately \$125,000 plus an additional \$50,000 if an elevator is required to service this area.

Other issues identified by the Library Director include the need for a regular replacement program for computer equipment and the installation of a wireless network which would allow personal laptop computers to be used at any location in the building. In addition, the Director foresees the need for expanded services to young adults, the elderly and homebound, and an increased outreach to children that are home-schooled.

From a staffing perspective the Library Director feels there is a need for an additional full-time staff person and expanded hours for the part-time position. This would allow increased supervision and assistance in the computer area and the ability to support the general increase in demand for services at the facility.

## **5. Public Works**

The Department of Public Works (DPW) oversees the summer and winter maintenance of roads, bridges and sidewalks as well as all drainage facilities in the town. The DPW currently maintains approximately 60 miles of town roads on a year-round basis and an additional 10 miles of state roads in the winter. The town also makes use of private contractors to maintain 28 miles of private roads

during the winter.

The public works garage is located on Seagull Drive, off Shaker Road, behind the Central Fire Station facility. It is located on a 30 acre parcel which also contains the fire station, solid waste transfer station, and capped landfill. The public works facility is comprised of two garages and a sand/salt storage area. The main garage is a five bay, concrete block facility which was constructed in 1956. It is used to store and maintain the department's trucks and other vehicles and also contains some office space and a break room/meeting area. The second garage is five bay pole barn structure, constructed in 1989, which is used for cold storage of the department's dump/plow trucks. One of the bays is used by the Fire Department for equipment storage.

Also located on the site is a wooden salt shed and an uncovered sand pile. The department can store approximately 200 tons of salt and 8,500 yards of sand at the facility at one time for winter use.

The DPW operates a regular paving and road rehabilitation program for all of its roadways, bridges and sidewalks through the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). Through this program the town has recently finished reclaiming portions of several roadways that required reconstruction including Hunt Hill Road and Mayall Road. The paving program allows the town to hot top all of its roadway surfaces once every six years. Annual contribution identified in the CIP for roads is approximately \$300,000.

The town has nine bridges that the DPW is responsible for maintaining and which are inspected every two years by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT). Two of these bridges, which include Knights Bridge on Mayall Road and Mayall Bridge on McGuire Road, need to be replaced at a cost of approximately \$150,000 each. The DOT will no longer provide matching funds, as it has in the past, to replace these structures, and so the town must assume full responsibility. A reserve fund has been establish in the CIP for the replacement and future maintenance of these structures.

The town presently has approximately 2.7 miles of sidewalks, of which 1,700 feet are currently under construction on Main Street in the Village. Annual costs identified in the CIP for sidewalk reconstruction and expansion is \$30,000 plus an additional \$10,000 for maintenance in the municipal budget. The town has a Sidewalk Committee which prepared a five year plan for sidewalk expansion that has recommended construction of sidewalks in the following areas.

- North Raymond Road from Shaker Road to the town beach (700 ft.)
- Shaker Road, from terminus of existing sidewalk, to Libby Hill Road (3,500 ft.)
- Route 100, from Gray Plaza to Post Office ( 1,000 ft.)
- Route 115, Gray Corner to Appletree Village (1,500 ft.)

The town also has a regular replacement schedule for its major pieces of equipment. Light vehicles, such as pickup trucks and cars, are on a 10 year rotation. Heavy equipment is on a 12 year rotation. Annual costs identified in the CIP reserve fund for these vehicles is approximately \$75,000.

From a staffing perspective, the department currently has seven (7) full-time personnel, which includes the Director's position, and one (1) regular part-time position. During the winter maintenance period the department hires an additional three (3) part-time personnel.

Needs Assessment - According to the Public Works Director, a facilities needs assessment has determined that the main garage facility is inadequate to meet the current needs of the department with regard to servicing, maintaining and storing equipment. The roof of the building was replaced 15 years ago with an expected useful life span of 20 years. There are also safety issues, with regard to roadway access, between the DPW and the solid waste transfer station that causes conflicts between residential vehicles and large trucks. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) now requires that all sand and salt storage areas be covered.

In light of these conditions the town commissioned the preparation of a facility's master plan that would address issues at the DPW as well as the public safety building and solid waste facilities. The plan calls for the construction of a new public works garage, on an adjoining parcel of land, which would include 14 truck bays, an office, lunch room, and locker rooms. The garage would also have an oversized bay with a lift that would be suitable for servicing most town vehicles. This new facility would have a new roadway access from Shaker Road which would separate it from solid waste operations. The existing pole barn facility would remain in use at its present location.

In addition, a new sand and salt storage shed would be constructed with a capacity of 7,500 yards of sand and 400 tons of salt. This building would be located on the site of the DPW's existing salt/sand storage area and would be large enough to allow mixing under cover. The total estimated cost for construction of the new garage and storage facility is approximately \$1.8 million.

The final departmental issue relates to current staffing levels. According to the Director, current staffing levels make it difficult to maintain adequate coverage during the summer months when all personnel take vacation time. He feels that the three (3) part-time positions funded during the winter months should be transitioned into full-time positions.

## **6. Solid Waste**

Gray disposes of its household solid waste at the Regional Waste Systems Inc. (RWS), a waste-to-energy incinerator, located in Portland. RWS is a non-profit solid waste management corporation that serves 27 cities and towns in Cumberland, Oxford, and York Counties in Maine. It is governed by a 28-member board and is owned and controlled by 21 member municipalities of which Gray is one. The town's existing contract with RWS extends to 2014.

The town's current level of household waste disposal is approximately 2,300 tons annually that are sent to the regional incinerator. In conjunction with this the town is also recycling almost 50% of its total waste stream. Mandatory recycling items include glass, tin cans, newspaper, corrugated cardboard and other paper, and plastic. Other bulky items which can also be recycled include light

metals, shingles, sheetrock, tires, mattresses, carpet, and processed wood. The town is also awaiting approval from the state for the establishment of a composting program which would allow residents to bring leaves and other materials for recycling. The composted material could then be made available to residents.

The town's solid waste is processed at the transfer station/recycling center, which is located on Seagull Drive, adjacent to the Public Works facility and central fire station. There is no curbside pickup of waste so residents are responsible for bringing all material to be disposed of to the facility. Residents now pay \$10 "per load" for household waste and itemized fees for other bulky items. There is no disposal fee for the mandatory recyclable materials.

There are two main buildings at the facility which include the compacter building and recycling building. The compacter building is a steel skinned structure, approximately 20 feet by 30 feet in size, which contains a hopper that funnels trash to an underlying container where it is compacted. The container can then be placed on a truck for transport. The recycling building is also a steel skinned structure, approximately 40 feet by 100 feet, that contains bins and four vertical bailers used for processing the recyclable materials. In addition there is a small office/break room that is shared by the staff. Also located on the site are seven outdoor bins made from pre-cast concrete used for storing bulky recycling materials. Other equipment operated by the department includes a backhoe and a forklift.

Needs Assessment - According to the Solid Waste Director, the compacter building is in relatively good condition and the compacter unit was rebuilt approximately four years ago. However, due to the design of the compacter the town must use a trash container that can be hauled by only one transport company. Therefore, future renovation/reconstruction of this building should allow for more standardized roll-off containers to be used which would allow the town to get competitive bids for hauling. It would cost approximately \$7,000 to retrofit the structure for this type of compacter.

The Director feels that the recycling building, which was constructed in 1982, is in need of upgrading to serve the needs of the department. Issues at this building include the need to replace overhead doors, lack of restrooms, poor heating system, roof leaks, and the need to widen loading docks. He would also like to see the installation of another bailer, preferably a horizontal style unit, which is more efficient for plastic materials.

The overall functioning of the transfer station site is considered to be problematic because access is gained through the DPW facility which creates safety conflicts between residential vehicles and large trucks. This issue, as well as deficiencies in the recycling building, would be addressed as part of the proposal currently being considered to reconstruct the DPW facilities. As part of this plan, Solid Waste would take over the existing Public Works garage which would be joined to the recycling building by means of an addition. The estimated cost for the Solid Waste facility's portion of this redevelopment project is approximately \$560,000.

The Director would also like to see a regular replacement schedule for vehicles and other equipment established in the town's capital improvements plan. Consideration is currently being given to transferring the Public Works Department's backhoe to Solid Waste in order to replace the current vehicle which has reached the end of its useful life.

## **7. Fire and Rescue Services**

Fire protection and emergency medical services in Gray are provided by the Gray Fire-Rescue Department. The department includes a dispatch operation which handles all emergency calls, assists the Public Works Department with its dispatch needs and processes other town related calls during non-business hours. The Fire-Rescue Department administers these services from the Central Fire Station facility located at the intersection of Shaker Road and Seagull Drive. The station house is part of the municipal services complex that also includes the public works and solid waste/recycling facilities. The department also maintains two substations which are located in Dry Mills and the Village.

The Central Fire Station is a two story masonry structure that was constructed in 1991. The ground floor of the facility has three double door vehicle bays, a hose tower, meeting room with kitchenette, dispatch area and entrance lobby. The upper floor contains eight offices which are used by the Chief, Assistant Chief, Fire Prevention/Safety Officer, and EMS Captain/Deputy. Two of the offices are used as bunkrooms for the per diem personnel and one is used as a substation by the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office for deputies covering the Gray area. The remaining office is used as a workroom and there is also a lounge area that is used by on-duty department personnel. The building also has a semi-finished basement which is currently used as an exercise area by the department as well as for the storage of town property.

The Village sub-station is a four bay wood frame structure located at the Gray Corner intersection. This building was constructed in the 1800s and was formerly used as the town hall. This is an unmanned station which the department presently uses to house its two forestry fire fighting vehicles. The Dry Mills sub-station is a two bay concrete block structure that was constructed in the early 1980s. The station is located on Shaker Road just south of its intersection with the North Raymond Road. This facility is unmanned and is used by the department to house one engine and a canteen unit.

The department provides 24 hour coverage, seven days a week for fire protection and emergency medical services in the town. These services are presently provided without full-time staffing and is comprised of a combination of contracted and volunteer personnel. The contracted services coverage relies on fire fighters and emergency medical technicians (EMT) who are full-time personnel of fire departments in neighboring municipalities. These personnel work a 24-hour shift in Gray and are paid on a "per diem" basis by the town. The department does have one full-time fire fighter position but it is currently vacant. The town also has mutual aid agreements with all of the adjoining municipalities which provides assistance for emergency calls in Gray. The portion of Gray

which lies to the west of Little Sebago Lake actually relies on the Raymond Fire Department, through the mutual aid agreement, for first response to emergency calls due to the limited road access to this area from within Gray.

In conjunction with the per diem personnel Gray also relies on volunteers, referred to as call personnel, for responding to emergency situations in the community. These call personnel are residents of Gray who are employed in other professions and respond to emergency calls when they are available. The department currently has a roster of approximately 50 call personnel. All call personnel are reimbursed on an hourly basis for responding to calls in Gray. The department budgets for up to 4,000 hours of assistance by call fire fighters, which according to the Fire Chief, is usually sufficient for current levels of demand.

The department’s dispatch operation is staffed by five full-time personnel who provide 24 hour coverage for emergency calls. Currently, 9-1-1 calls for assistance go to the public safety answering point (PSAP) for the area which is located in Windham and operated by the Cumberland County Sheriff’s Department. These calls are then routed to the dispatch center in Gray.

The department has 13 major pieces of equipment which are listed in Table 8-1. The department has a regular replacement schedule for most of its major equipment which is funded through the town’s CIP. Current annual appropriations to this capital reserve fund are approximately \$92,000. The replacement schedule calls for the purchase of a new squad car in 2003 to replace the 1985 model.

<b>Model Year</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Replacement Year</b>
2000	Engine E-3	2020
2000	Rescue R-2	2010
1997	Platform L-1	2022
1996	Engine/Tanker E-2	2016
1996	Rescue R-1	2011
1991	Support S-7	2024
1985	Squad S-6	2003
1985	Canteen	NA
1981	Engine	2006
1973	Engine E-4 (Reserve)	NA
1970	Forestry	NA
1968	Tanker	NA
1933	Antique Parade Unit	NA

Needs Assessment - The Central Fire Station is in good condition and is centrally located, according to the Chief. Most areas of Gray can be reached by emergency vehicles within 4 to 5 minutes from this facility. However, the station lacks sufficient classroom type space for training personnel and is also in need of additional storage, according to the Chief. He also feels that a fire drill building constructed on the property would be very useful for training purposes. These issues would be addressed as part of comprehensive municipal complex upgrade being considered at this site for fire-rescue, public works and solid waste departments. As part of this upgrade the Central Station would have two vehicle bays added, the existing training area would be expanded to approximately 2,400 square feet, and a portion of the existing bays would be converted for additional storage space. The facility upgrade would also include the installation of an elevator for second floor access and the

construction of a separate training building. The total estimated cost of these improvements is approximately \$890,000.

The Village and Dry Mills sub-stations are not critical in terms of response time for the department but do provide useful vehicle storage space, according to the Chief. The Village facility is in need of a partial roof replacement, window and door upgrades, furnace upgrade and insulation. Although this facility is located at the busiest intersection in Gray, the Chief indicates that response time during peak traffic periods has not resulted in significant delays. However, due to its location, site constraints and age the long-term functionality of this facility for the department is marginal. The Dry Mills station is in better condition according to the Chief and is primarily in need of overhead door replacement and other minor maintenance upgrades. The long-term functionality of this facility is also questionable but is still useful to the department, and it is relatively inexpensive to operate on an annual basis.

The Chief feels that the town should investigate the potential for a future sub-station in the eastern portion of Gray due to longer access times to this area and the recent opening of the Pinelands office facility immediately over the town line in New Gloucester. The department is currently exploring the creation of a regional facility in this area that might actually be located at Pinelands and shared by the towns of New Gloucester, Pownal, North Yarmouth, and Durham, which could all be served from this location.

From a staffing perspective the Chief feels that the per diem approach for providing 24 hour coverage for the community has worked well. However, maintaining adequate personnel for this system is a concern and can only be supported if there is a sufficient pool of fire fighters and EMTs available from neighboring departments that are interested in participating. According to the Chief, all shifts are only filled 75% of the time which leaves gaps in the coverage. Although the department also relies on the services of call fire fighters their availability to respond during daytime hours is limited.

From an equipment standpoint the Chief feels that the current vehicle replacement schedule is adequately serving the needs of the department. However, he would like to see the addition of a haz-mat trailer, which could outfit 12 personnel, added to the department's inventory. This equipment would be used to supplement the County's haz-mat services.

The final concern for the department is the availability of an adequate water supply. The Chief would like to see a more comprehensive approach to extending water lines into developing portions of the community. He also feels that the town should require the installation of 30,000 gallon, underground cisterns as part of the subdivision process. Although a number of dry hydrants have been installed throughout the town, they are not reliable sources of water and require regular maintenance

## 8. Police Services

Gray does not presently operate a police department as part of its municipal services. The town currently relies on the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office (CCS) and the Maine State Police (MSP) to respond to police calls in Gray. Deputies from the CCS use an office in Gray's Central Fire Station as a sub-station and the MSP operate from Troop B headquarters located on Shaker Road, at the entrance to the Maine Wildlife Park in Gray. Although both the CCS and MSP respond to calls in Gray, personnel from these departments are also generally responsible for providing assistance to three other towns in addition to Gray.

In 1998 the town's Public Safety Committee was charged with investigating possible alternatives for police protection in Gray. The Committee contacted a number of police oriented organizations in the state, such as the Maine Community Policing Institute and the Maine Chiefs of Police Association, for information in order to assess the town's existing conditions. Information was also gathered from other communities, with full-time police departments, that were similar to Gray. The Committee also attempted to conduct a opinion survey of town residents through the *Gray News* in order to ascertain the public's desire regarding this issue, but received very few responses to the questionnaire.

Based on the results of its investigation the Committee arrived at several possible alternatives that they felt should be considered by the town. These included the following options:

- 1) Establishing the town's own police department
- 2) Contracting with the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office for dedicated police services
- 3) Contracting with the Maine State Police for dedicated police services
- 4) Create a regional police department (not part of original recommendations)

Cost comparisons were developed for each of these alternatives in order to facilitate the community decision-making process. The first alternative, establishing a town police department, the Committee considered staffing levels of one, three, and five officers. Although it was concluded that five full-time personnel were necessary for 24 hour coverage, seven days a week, the Committee felt that other staffing levels should be presented as well. The estimated annual costs for each option were: 1 officer - \$79,000; 3 officers - \$175,000; and 5 officers - \$261,000. These costs included salaries, benefits, vehicle purchase and maintenance, uniforms, equipment, and supplies. The costs do not however, include the need for providing a police station facility or the need for dispatch services that would be required to support departmental operations.

Similar cost comparisons were prepared by CCS and MSP for providing officers that would be assigned specifically to Gray for 24/7 coverage or some other level of contracted patrol coverage. The annual cost estimates provided by the CCS were as follows: 1 officer - \$68,600; 3 officers - \$205,800; and 5 officers - \$343,000. The estimated annual costs for comparable service by the MSP was: 1 officer - \$62,800; 3 officers - \$188,500; and 5 officers - \$314,000. These costs also included

salaries, benefits, vehicle purchase and maintenance, uniforms, equipment, and supplies. It is assumed that the CCS would continue to operate out of the sub-station at the Central Fire Station and the MSP would use the Troop B headquarters to provide their services. The proposal from Cumberland County indicates that the same personnel would be used to provide services to Gray. The MSP alternative however, did not provide the same guarantee of dedicated officers for the community.

## 9. Schools

Educational services in Gray are provided through a regional school district, Maine School Administrative District #15 (MSAD), which also includes the town of New Gloucester. The Gray-New Gloucester (GNG) district provides education for grades kindergarten through twelfth, as well as special education and continuing education programs. Educational services are administered through the Superintendent of Schools Office which oversees the operation of six school buildings including the Dunn Elementary School, Memorial Elementary School, Russell Elementary School, GNG Middle School, GNG High School, and the Pennell Institute. Table 8-2 provides a listing of these facilities along with their most recent enrollment levels and design capacity. The remaining school district facility is the building that houses the Superintendent’s office.

Facility	Grade/Use	Enrollment	Capacity
Dunn School	K-5	325	425
Memorial School	K-5	250	250*
Russell School	K-5	260	341
Middle School	6-8	566	600
High School	9-12	663**	850
Pennell Institute	Special & Cont. Ed.	NA	NA
<small>*Includes the use of a double portable classroom                      **Does not include 53 tuitioned students from Raymond                      Source: Superintendent of Schools</small>			

Needs Assessment - The GNG School District is in the process of completing a multi-year assessment of its school facilities. This assessment includes both a physical evaluation of structures as well as the preparation of projected enrollment levels over the next decade. The study<sup>1</sup> which examined enrollment projections was completed in 2001 and provided an estimation of enrollment levels through 2010 at each grade level. The analysis also presented three alternative projections that evaluated the potential impacts that the Pineland development in New Gloucester could have on future enrollment levels. The study concluded that Pineland would not have a substantial impact on enrollment resulting in only minor differences in the three projection scenarios. Table 8-3 presents projected enrollment for the district based on the *Best Fit Model* presented in the

<sup>1</sup>SAD 15 Enrollment Projections 2001-2010 FINAL REPORT, prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc., February 2001.

2001 study. Overall, the projections suggest that the district’s enrollments are expected to remain relatively flat in grades K-5 and decline in grades 6-12 through the remainder of the decade. According to the Superintendent the projected trends appear to be materializing in the districts enrollment levels over the past two years in grades K through 8. However, the projections for grades 9-12 understate anticipated enrollment levels, according to the Superintendent. He indicates that the number of high school students are expected to peak in year 2004-05 at approximately 820 students and then begin to decline for the remainder of the decade. This peak enrollment level includes the tuitioned students from the Town of Raymond.

School Year	K-5	6-8	9-12 <sup>(3)</sup>
2002-03 Actual <sup>(2)</sup>	835	566	716
2003-04 Projected	881	485	683
2004-05	876	444	691
2005-06	886	412	690
2006-07	879	437	637
2007-08	886	433	609
2008-09	879	452	567
2009-10	883	441	562
2010-11	890	440	572
Change 04-11	+9	-45	-111

NOTE: Enrollment projections do include special education students  
 (1) Represents combined enrollment for the towns of Gray and New Gloucester  
 (2) Enrollments as of October 1, 2002  
 (3) Assumes an average of 50 students from Raymond through 2010-11  
 Source: Planning Decisions, Inc. and Superintendent's Office

**Dunn School** - The Dunn Elementary School contains grades K through 5 and is located on Morse Road in New Gloucester. The facility was built in the 1940s and renovated in 1998 for approximately \$3.6 million. The renovation included the addition of a new gym/cafeteria facility. The building also has room to create additional classroom space if needed. According to the Superintendent, this facility is in relatively good condition but does need a roof rehabilitation and the creation of outdoor playing fields. Another issue related to this facility is that it is not centrally located which results in additional transportation costs and other related issues.

**Memorial School** - The Memorial Elementary School is located in New Gloucester on Intervale Road and contains grades K through 5. The facility was constructed in 1948 with additions in 1960 and 1972. This facility is presently operating at capacity with the use of a double portable classroom which was added in 2000. According to the facility’s assessment study<sup>2</sup> this school building is “generally worn out” and in need of considerable renovation or replacement. The site on which the building is located is also problematic in that it is undersized and does not allow for easy expansion

<sup>2</sup>Comprehensive Plan & Facility Space Needs Study, MSAD #15 Elementary Schools, PDT Architects and Allied Engineering, Inc., December 2000.

of the facility. Options for addressing the issues related to this school are discussed later in this section.

**Russell School** - The Russell Elementary School contains grades K through 5 and is located on Gray Park Road in Gray Village. Like the Memorial School the facility was also constructed in 1948 with additions in 1960 and 1968. An examination of this facility indicates that this school, portions of which are approximately 50 years old, is also in need of significant renovation or reconstruction. In addition, the school site, which is less than five acres, does not meet the minimum state recommended size of eight acres (23 acres is the preferred size). Vehicular access to the site is also difficult and the fact that all of the abutting property is developed, limits the potential for reconfiguration or expansion. Options for addressing the issues related to this school are also discussed later in this section.

**Middle School** - The Middle School is located on Libby Hill Road in Gray and contains grades 6 through 8. The building was constructed in 1989 and is part of the school complex that also includes the High School, which is located on an adjoining parcel. According to the Superintendent, the Middle School is in excellent condition, has been well-maintained, and is not in need of any major facility upgrading at this time. The issue that will need to be addressed at this facility is the condition and quantity of outdoor playing fields. These facilities are intensively used by the school district teams, the town's Parks and Recreation Department, and private athletic leagues in the community. As a result, there is a need for higher levels of maintenance on these fields. In addition, consideration should be given to acquiring abutting land, where available, for the creation of additional fields. These issues are discussed in more detail in the Recreation and Open Space Chapter (Chapter 7) of this plan.

**High School** - The High School is also located on Libby Hill Road and contains grades 9 through 12. Portions of the facility were constructed in 1960 and 1976, and originally functioned as both a middle school and high school until such time as the present middle school was constructed. According to the Superintendent, this facility is structurally sound and in generally good condition. There is, however, a ventilation issue in the 1960s portion of the building that needs to be addressed. The primary concern with this facility is that it is expected to reach capacity within the next few years. After reaching the expected peak enrollment period in 2004-05, enrollment is projected to decline to levels that can be accommodated within the capacity of the building. However, in order to address the peak enrollment level consideration is being given to converting approximately 6,000 square feet of shop space into four classrooms as well as space for art/music instruction. It may also be possible to reuse the portable classrooms currently in use at the Memorial School if that facility is renovated in the next few years.

**Pennell Institute** - The Pennell Institute is located on Main Street in Gray's Village area. The building is a two story brick structure which was constructed in 1876. A one story addition was added in the 1960s. The facility presently houses the district's offices for special and continuing education programs as well as four classrooms and a conference room. According to the

Superintendent, the facility is in fair condition and is in need of a roof replacement, electrical upgrade, and treatment for radon. There is also a shortage of on-site parking. A complete facility evaluation and cost estimate has not yet been prepared for the structure because the district is considering giving the building to the town for use as municipal offices. This alternative was discussed earlier in this chapter. If the town does decide to take this building the district would have to relocate the programs currently housed there. Possible alternatives for this scenario include renovating the basement of the Superintendent's Office for the special education program and transferring adult education to the high school.

**Superintendent's Office Building** - The Superintendent's office building is located on Shaker Road in Gray Village and contains the administrative offices for the district. The building is a wood frame structure that was constructed in 1902 and originally used as a primary school. According to the Superintendent, the building is in excellent condition and has adequate space for current staffing levels although storage space is limited. Issues for the facility include the need to upgrade the septic system, create additional parking and improve traffic circulation. Circulation is an issue because the building shares the parcel with the Russell School which uses the Superintendent's office driveway, which is inadequately sized, for use as an access road to the school for cars and busses. These site issues will be addressed as part of the Russell School renovations if the district decides to upgrade that facility.

**Elementary School Facilities Alternatives** - As discussed previously in this section, the study of elementary school facilities commissioned by the school district has determined that the Russell and Memorial elementary schools are in need of substantial renovation and upgrading. Several options are currently being considered by the district to address these deficiencies which include renovating existing facilities, partial demolition and new construction, and closing some existing buildings and consolidating students into fewer elementary schools. The primary options presently being considered included the following:

1. Renovate and expand both the Memorial and Russell Schools  
(estimated cost \$12.4 million)
2. Close the Memorial School and renovate/expand Russell School to 450 student capacity  
(estimated cost \$6.4 million)
3. Close both the Memorial and Russell Schools and construct a new school which would possibly be located on the Dunn School site  
(estimated cost \$12.2 million)

The school district has been gathering public comments from residents as to which option should be pursued. The Superintendent and the School Board distributed a questionnaire to voters, in both Gray and New Gloucester, on Election Day of 2002, which received a 41% response rate (2,090 of 5,006 voters responded). The questions and responses are presented in Table 8-4.

<b>Table 8-4</b> <b>Summary of Responses from "Voters Survey" - November 2002</b> <b>Towns of Gray and New Gloucester</b>		
Question	# Responding "Yes"	# Responding "No"
1. Do you favor the closing of Memorial and Russell School to build a consolidated school in an effort to receive maximum State of Maine funding?	728 (34.8%)	1,362 (65.1%)
2. Would you favor consolidation of Grades K-2 at one school (Russell or Memorial) and Grades 3-5 at Dunn?	715 (33.3%)	1,426 (66.6%)
3. Do you favor keeping all three elementary schools even if it is at a higher cost to local taxpayers than consolidation?	1,086 (54.4%)	908 (45.5%)
4. If you would prefer to renovate both Memorial and Russell schools, which of the following do you favor? (choose only one)		
A) On-going renovations of Memorial and Russell Schools at local expense.	442 (27.4%)	
B) Complete renovation/reconstruction of Memorial and Russell Schools at local expense.	509 (31.6%)	
C) Renovation of Memorial and Russell Schools only if they are at maximum state funding participation in six to ten years.	658 (40.8%)	
5. Do you favor the district selling or transferring ownership of the Pennell Institute/School building?	1,240 (66%)	636 (34%)
Source: Superintendent of Schools Office		

Although the results of the survey presented in Table 8-4 may not represent the views of all residents, since it was not a statistically valid survey, they do provide insight into the view of voters within both communities. The general indication is that residents would like to maintain their existing neighborhood elementary schools versus a more consolidated approach to providing educational services. However, it is less clear that people are willing to pay higher costs for doing so if state funding is not available to support this approach. Initial discussions with state officials indicate that state funding may not be available to keep operating all three elementary schools. The Superintendent anticipates that the school district will make a final decision in 2003 which will be followed by an application to the state.

## 10. Utility Systems

### A. Water Distribution

The Gray Water District is responsible for water distribution in Gray. The District was incorporated in 1930 and currently serves 950 customers. The major corridors serviced by the

water system include: Route 26, Gray Road, Lewiston Road, Portland Road, Yarmouth Road, Mayall Road, Merrill Road, and Depot Road, which are illustrated on Map 8-1. Hydrants are provided along the distribution routes. The system layout is shown on the Water Distribution Map. There are also six dry hydrants located away from the distribution system for firefighting. Residents in the remaining parts of Gray get their drinking water from private wells.

The District's water source is a gravel pack well with an authorized pump rate of 300 gallons per minute (GPM). The average pump rate is 200GPM. The annual withdrawal is just over 101,000,000 gallons. The water quality has been rated Maine's best.

The District is planning an extension of its distribution system on Portland Road to Whitney Road. The expansion is also shown on Map 8-1.

### **B. Sanitary Sewer**

There is no municipal sanitary sewer system in Gray. All areas are served by on-site septic systems.

### **C. Natural Gas**

There is no natural gas service in Gray.

### **D. Telephone**

Pine Tree Networks provides telephone service in the Town of Gray. In addition, they provide DSL service to limited areas. DSL service is available to areas within 18,000 feet of a switch. Presently Pine Tree maintains three switches in town located on Route 26, Campbell Shore Road, and Intervale Road.

### **E. Cable Television**

Cable television is available throughout Gray. Service is provided by Time Warner. The firm also provides high speed broadband (internet) service throughout the community.

## **11. Fiscal Capacity**

A key factor in evaluating municipal infrastructure needs is the fiscal capability of a community to finance identified improvements. This section examines recent trends in municipal expenditures and revenues for the Town of Gray. Changes in property values are also discussed. Data used in this analysis was primarily obtained from the "Independent Auditor's Report" that was contained in various *Annual Reports of the Town of Gray*. It should be noted that financial data in Gray is reported on a Fiscal Year (FY) basis that begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Blank Page for Map 8-1 - Water Distribution System

Blank Page for Back of Map 8-1

As illustrated in Tables 8-5 and 8-6 municipal expenditures in Gray (between FY 1998-1999 and FY 2001-2002) grew from \$7,267,537 to \$9,608,984. Yearly increases (Table 8-6) ranged from 8.5% to 11.1%. Education, by a significant margin, represents the largest municipal expenditure (51.1% to 53.9% of total expenditures) during the four fiscal years examined. The second largest expenditure category, Public Works, increased in terms of total dollars allocated each year, but declined in terms of a percent of total expenditures (Table 8-5). Other major funding categories, in terms of percentage of total expenditures, include General Government, Protection/Public Safety and Other.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that while Debt Service and Capital Outlay have represented about 6% to 8% of actual expenditures during the past four fiscal years, the amount of funding allocated to these types of expenditures (see Table 8-6) have declined slightly during the period reviewed.

	FY 1998-1999	Percent of Total	FY 1999-2000	Percent of Total	FY 2000-2001	Percent of Total	FY 2001-2002	Percent of Total
General Government	\$ 486,218	6.7%	\$ 558,100	7.0%	\$ 578,898	6.5%	\$ 674,658	7.0%
Protection/Public Safety	422,795	5.8%	493,801	6.2%	536,775	6.1%	568,088	5.9%
Public Works	1,149,708	15.8%	1,178,323	14.8%	1,295,745	14.6%	1,318,465	13.7%
Recreation	130,693	1.8%	143,248	1.8%	169,769	1.9%	160,540	1.7%
County Tax	270,462	3.7%	249,224	3.1%	262,708	3.0%	296,249	3.1%
Education	3,713,232	51.1%	4,166,313	52.3%	4,694,140	53.0%	5,177,450	53.9%
Social Groups/Health and Welfare	27,927	0.4%	31,356	0.4%	24,827	0.3%	24,400	0.3%
Other	460,673	6.4%	413,089	5.2%	567,767	6.4%	721,094	7.5%
Debt Service	268,855	3.7%	258,509	3.3%	248,100	2.8%	237,608	2.5%
Capital Outlay	336,974	4.6%	424,511	5.3%	420,207	4.7%	356,552	3.7%
Tax Increment Financing	-	-	50,963	0.6%	53,768	0.6%	73,880	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,267,537</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$7,967,437</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$8,852,704</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$9,608,984</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Based on the "Independent Auditor's Reports" contained in various Annual Reports of the Town of Gray, Maine

<sup>3</sup>The "Other" category involves a variety of insurance and employee benefit types of related expenditures. The largest component of this category is usually employee benefits.

	FY 1998-1999 to FY 1999-2000	FY 1999-2000 to FY 2000-2001	FY 2000-2001 to FY 2001-2002
General Government	14.8%	3.7%	16.5%
Protection/Public Safety	16.7%	8.7%	5.8%
Public Works	2.5%	10.0%	1.8%
Recreation	9.6%	18.5%	-5.4%
County Tax	-7.9%	5.4%	12.7%
Education	12.2%	12.7%	10.3%
Social Groups/Health and Welfare	12.3%	-20.8%	-1.7%
Other	-10.3%	37.4%	27.0%
Debt Service	-3.8%	-4.0%	-4.2%
Capital Outlay	26.0%	-1.0%	-15.1%
Tax Investment Financing	-	5.5%	37.4%
Total	9.6%	11.1%	8.5%
Source: Based on the "Independent Auditor's Reports" contained in various Annual Reports of the Town of Gray			

An examination of municipal revenues, noted in Tables 8-7 and 8-8, indicates that the largest portion of town funds, approximately 70% per year, were obtained from General Property Taxes. The category designated as Other Taxes, the second largest revenue source, primarily represents revenues from excise taxes. The next largest source of revenue, Intergovernmental, represents a variety of different state government funding initiatives. A significant portion of this funding involves revenue sharing and the homestead exemption. This source of funding, as indicated in Table 8-8, has declined slightly during the past two years. The remaining revenue categories provided less than 10% of total funding received by the town. It is interesting to note that Charges for Service, which represent only about 3% of total revenues, increased during each of the four years examined, as did General Property Taxes. Overall revenue increased yearly (Table 8-8) in a range of 6% to 11% during the past four years. Property tax revenues are based on local property valuation and tax rates. Table 8-8 illustrates local property valuations and property tax rates for the past five years.

	<b>FY 1998-1999</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>FY 1999-2000</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>FY 2000-2001</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>FY 2001-2002</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
General Property Taxes	\$5,434,324	70.0%	\$5,900,250	70.1%	\$6,105,048	68.4%	\$6,992,859	70.5%
Other Taxes	873,355	11.2%	986,601	11.7%	1,017,224	11.4%	1,240,239	12.5%
Intergovernmental	762,803	9.8%	957,581	11.4%	938,073	10.5%	891,805	9.0%
Charges for Service	245,318	3.2%	277,190	3.3%	315,975	3.5%	340,670	3.4%
Interest	200,810	2.6%	203,349	2.4%	381,975	4.3%	198,895	2.0%
Other	246,315	3.2%	92,112	1.1%	165,091	1.9%	252,425	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,762,925</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$8,417,083</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$8,923,386</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$9,916,893</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Based on the "Independent Auditor's Reports" contained in various Annual Reports of the Town of Gray, Maine

	<b>FY 1998-1999 to FY 1999-2000</b>	<b>FY 1999-2000 to FY 2000-2001</b>	<b>FY 2000-2001 to FY 2001-2002</b>
General Property Taxes	8.6%	3.5%	14.5%
Other Taxes	13.0%	3.1%	21.9%
Intergovernmental	12.9%	-2.0%	-4.9%
Charges for Service	12.9%	14.0%	7.8%
Interest	1.3%	87.8%	-47.9%
Other	-62.6%	79.2%	52.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>

Source: Based on the "Independent Auditor's Reports" contained in various Annual Reports of the Town of Gray, Maine

As noted in Table 8-9 local property valuation has increased between 2.7% to 3.3% yearly. It is currently estimated that local valuation currently represents about 80% of true market value. This ratio of local assessment (\$352,755,072) to market value, equates to a market value of approximately \$440,943,840.

Fiscal Year	Total Local Valuation	Percent Change	Tax Rate (Per \$1,000 Valuation)	Percent Change
1997-1998	\$315,493,592	—	\$16.80	—
1998-1999	\$324,070,730	2.7%	\$17.55	4.5%
1999-2000	\$332,027,530	2.5%	\$18.46	5.2%
2000-2001	\$342,898,351	3.3%	\$18.44	-0.1%
2001-2002	\$352,755,072	2.9%	\$20.50	11.1%

Source: Town of Gray, Fiscal Year 2002-2003 Proposed Budget

## 12. Implications for the Future

This chapter has presented an overview of the existing municipal services and infrastructure presently operated by the town and school district. The information presented here indicates that Gray is currently confronted with many questions regarding possible changes in municipal facilities that are used by town departments and the school district to deliver services to the community. Many of these facilities are in need of renovation, expansion, upgrading, or replacement due their age, functional obsolescence, or increased demand for service.

Some of the issues about facilities are related to growth in the community which results in the need to provide existing services to more people, households, roadways, vehicles, etc. However, some of the deficiencies in the town’s infrastructure are also attributable to the lack of sustained capital investment over a continuous time period. This is a common occurrence in most communities where emphasis is often placed on controlling expenditures in an effort to reduce tax increases. The result however, is that a backlog of deferred facility needs develops that may suddenly require attention at the same time. The way to avoid this situation is through long-term planning for capital improvements through a capital investment program (CIP) which the town formally initiated in 2002 with its *Capital Investment Program Handbook*. The CIP, in conjunction with this comprehensive plan, can be used by the town to identify capital needs and make regular annual contributions to reserve funds that will be used to address existing and anticipated facility needs. This will not reduce the town’s capital expenditures but it will help to extend the fiscal impact over a longer period of time and make expenditures more predictable.

While the CIP will be an asset for future community planning there are numerous facility related issues confronting the town at this time that require more immediate attention. There are also issues related to what levels of service the town wishes to maintain in areas such as police and fire protection, library, recreation, and school facilities. Many of these issues represent quality of life decisions on which the community must come to some consensus about how to proceed. Another key to addressing existing facility needs will be to set priorities for the order in which improvements will be made. These priorities should be determined not only by cost or safety considerations, but also be based on a logical and comprehensive approach that considers the sequencing of improvements from both a physical planning as well as a financial investment perspective. Capital improvements should also be based on which alternative will not only serve the immediate needs of the community, but also position the town to upgrade facilities beyond the foreseeable planning horizon of this comprehensive plan.