

VII. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

BACKGROUND

Derry's community facilities and municipal service provision have met almost overwhelming challenges of development growth over the past three decades. During that time, the Town has rapidly transformed from a small rural town to a busy, diverse community of over 30,000 residents. While Derry remains a town in its municipal structure, its population now exceeds those of several existing New Hampshire cities. The Town has developed water, sewer, roads, police, fire, emergency services, and recreation facilities that have striven to keep pace with this rapid growth. When it became clear in the early 1990s that development growth was exceeding the Town's capacity to serve it, the Town carried out a growth management plan, 30-year capital improvement plan, and subsequent adoption of a growth management ordinance. This ordinance links future development to the Town's capacity to accommodate it. This Element provides an overview of Derry's current community facilities, and outlines ongoing actions to strengthen those facilities and community services.

**Table VII-1
Derry School Enrollment: 2000-2001**

School (Grades)	2000/ 2001
<i>Elementary</i>	
Derry Village School (1-5)	721
Charles Floyd School (1-3)	173
East Derry M E S (1-5)	793
Grinnell School (1-5)	611
South Range School (1-5)	542
Gilbert H. Hood School (6-8)	907
West Running Brook School (6-8)	925
<i>Total Elementary</i>	4672
<i>Pinkerton Academy(High School)</i>	2090
Grand Total	6762

Source: Derry Coop School District

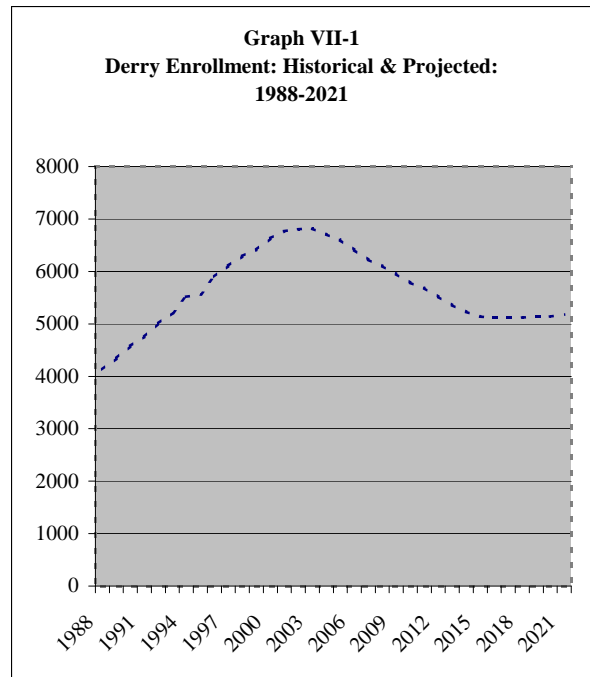
Schools

The Derry Cooperative School District has five elementary schools, and two middle schools. High school students (9-12) attend Pinkerton Academy – a private school. The total enrollment for all schools in the 2000/2001 school year was 6,762 pupils – a 1% increase from the 1999/2000 school year – this due to an increase in high school enrollment. For elementary schools, the average classroom size in 2000/2001 ranged from 22 to 25 pupils per class.

**Table VII-2
Average Elementary School Class Size: 2000-2001**

School	Average No. Per Class
Derry Village	25
Charles Floyd	22
East Derry MES	24
Grinnell School	24
South Range	25

Source: Derry Coop School District



As can be viewed on the above graph, Derry's total school enrollment grew steadily between 1988 and 2001. Projections from 2001 to 2006 indicate that the school population will increase to just under

7,000 pupils. Projections ten years and more suggest the possibility of a declining enrollment, particularly if average household size in Derry decreases; however these projections may not be reliable. Due to the attractiveness of Pinkerton Academy as a high school, Derry is known to be a magnet community for families seeking this advantageous educational opportunity for their children. This may draw a higher-than average influx of families with middle and elementary school children to Derry. An increase in Derry’s average household size between 1990 and 2000 may support this possibility, as indicated in the following Table.

Table VII-3
Change in Household Size:
Derry & Neighbors

	Persons Per Unit			
	1970	1980	1990	2000
Derry	3.1	2.7	2.5	2.6
Londonderry	3.3	3.0	3.0	2.9
Manchester	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.3

Source: U.S. Census

Derry has been considering the phased construction of a new school for grades 1-8 to be located at Scenic Drive to reduce existing classroom size for Derry pupils and to provide additional space for the larger group of lower elementary pupils as they enter middle school. In March, 2001, the needed bond issue was not passed by the necessary majority of votes. The Town and school district are exploring how to proceed next.

Town Offices

A major facility initiative is underway to develop a new Town municipal center that will house a council chamber, administration offices, planning and zoning board functions, current Town offices, planning department, facilities and public works administration. This facility will consolidate Town functions presently scattered among several locations and serve as a major step toward the goal of one-stop municipal service. Location of this facility in the Downtown further strengthens its revitalization.

Two additional buildings owned by the Town – the Adams Memorial Building and the Depot – are of significant historical merit and potential additional magnets within the Downtown. The Adams Memorial Building, recently renovated, will be used

as a cultural arts center. As of the date of this Plan, the Town Council is exploring the best use of the Depot in the Downtown and is seeking proposals toward this end.

During the 1999-2000 master planning process, participating citizens and officials discussed the need and potential for development of a senior center and also a center for teens and teen activity. Next steps include evaluating the possibility and feasibility of expanding or transforming existing facilities to serve these important needs, or development of new facilities.

Table VII-4
Solid Waste Generated: 1997-1999

	1997	1998	1999	%Chnge:
	97-99			
Amount	14,954	14,328	14,881	-0.5%
(tons)				

Source: Derry Public Works Dept.

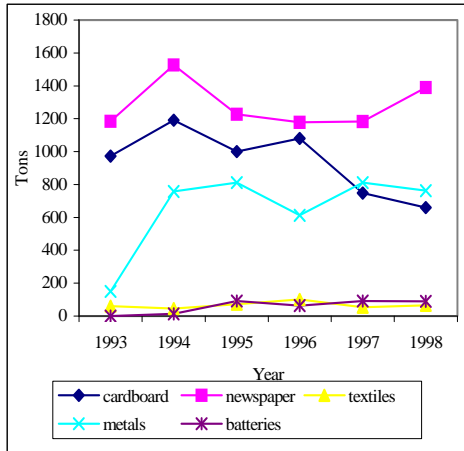
Solid Waste and Recycling

In 1999, Derry residents and businesses generated 14,881 tons of non-recyclable solid waste. This amount was about the same as for the previous two years.

In 1989, the Town adopted a fee for disposal of commercial and industrial solid waste. Since then, the amount of nonresidential solid waste – about 1/3 of the solid waste stream - has decreased. The Department’s estimate for FY 2001, assuming no change in consumer disposal habits and growth in the Derry population is 16,381 tons hauled for the year. Assuming the amount and cost of hauling per ton remains the same, the projected FY 2001 disposal cost to the Town is \$178,132. As of the date of this Plan, the Town is exploring a “pay-as-you-throw” option to increase recycling of materials.

Graph VII-2 represents the amounts of varying items that were recycled in Derry between 1993 and 1998. While there is variation among the types of items recycled, the greatest amount of recycling occurred in 1994 and 1995. In 1994, Derry received the “Best Recycling Program Award in New Hampshire” as presented by the Northeast Resource Recovery Association.

**Graph VII-2
Recycling in Derry
1993-1998**



The expected FY 2001 cost per ton for disposing of (nonrecyclable) solid waste is \$48 per ton. The cost for hauling and disposing of recyclable materials is \$13.78 per ton. In calendar year 2000, revenues generated from recycling were \$23.25 per ton. Hence the Town made a net gain of \$9.47 per ton of recycled materials, about \$37,000 in net revenue.

Clearly, the Town could benefit financially both if the amount of solid waste hauled were reduced and if more of that solid waste were recycled. According to the Public Works Department, the average Derry resident generates about 1,175 pounds of rubbish per year – a little more than half a ton per resident per year – and compared to a national average of 1,000 pounds per person per year. If the Town were to initiate a recycling awareness program that persuaded Derry residents to reduce or recycle rubbish by about 175 pounds per person yearly - to conform with the national average, the Town could save an estimated 15% (about \$130,000) in solid waste disposal costs per year.

As of the writing of this Plan, the Town is considering alternatives to improve the existing transfer station through either expanding the existing facility or constructing a new one.

Water

Derry is currently served by a municipal water system located in the central west section of town, the Pennichuck Water system serving clusters of neighborhoods primarily in East Derry, and a few small community water systems (See Map VII-1). As of 1999, the average annual municipal water usage for the central west water system was 1.915 million gallons per day (mgd). This represented a 15% increase in water usage since 1995.

**Table VII-5
Derry Municipal Water Usage
1995-2000 Average Annual Gallons/Day**

1995	1,660,000
1996	1,727,000
1997	1,827,000
1998	1,818,000
1999	1,915,000
2000	1,920,000
% inc: '95-00	16%

Source: Derry Public Works Dept.

Wastewater

Derry's central west area – west of Route 28 – is served by a municipal sewer system. This area, roughly corresponding to the area served by municipal water, is also the most densely developed area of the Town. In 2000, the average annual amount of wastewater collected was 1.92 million gallons per day. The high 1996 level of 2.26 mgd

**Table VII-6
Derry Municipal Wastewater Collected
1995-2000 Average Annual Gallons/Day**

1995	1,820,000
1996	2,260,000
1997	1,191,000
1998	2,020,000
1999	1,680,000
2000	1,920,000
% inc: '95-00	5%

Source: Dept. of Public Works

likely may have been due to the large amount of flooding that took place in that year, causing a high

level of infiltration. The reduced mgd level in 1999 may have been due to the system improvements to reduce infiltration taken in that year.

Police Department

The Police Department is located adjacent to Ross' Corner. As of the writing of this Plan, the police facility is considered adequate for the Department's needs. This could be reviewed during the next several years with regard to the future development of Ross's Corner as a business center as well as an area of intense traffic activity.

Fire and Ambulance Service

During 2000, a study was carried out to review and assess alternative station locations to serve the various neighborhoods and locations within Derry in appropriate response time. Based upon the results of this study, the Fire Department is in the process of preparing recommendations for expanded station locations throughout town.

Communications

Presently, dispatch communications are spread among several locations in the Town. Dispatch for fire and ambulance service is located at the Fire Station headquarters. The Police Department has its own dispatch operating out of its building near Ross' Corner. A communications system for emergency management is located in Town Hall. The possibility of consolidating communications in one central location has been raised for consideration.

Roadway Infrastructure

Derry's road system has grown rapidly over the last three decades, concurrent with its development growth. The Town's roadway network included 160 miles of roads as of 1996. During the ten years preceding 1996, paved Town roads increased at the rate of about one mile per year.

In 1985, the Town conducted a roadway management study to assess about 1/3 of the Town's road network. This led to a road improvement program, implemented over a seven-year period, and a

continuing roadway management program, administered by the Town's Public Works Highway Division, that involves a state-of-the-art, computerized road assessment system that can evaluate, track, identify needed treatment, and estimate costs for road maintenance over time. This computer modeling system can also compare alternative maintenance/cost scenarios that can clarify policy and fiscal choices as well as enhance fiscal and capital planning. The roadway management program coupled with a pavement management program allows the Town to take a systematic, network-level approach to managing and maintaining its roads that could serve as an exemplar for other facilities management and planning in Derry.

Libraries

Derry is fortunate to have two libraries – the Derry Public Library, located on Broadway near the Downtown, and the Taylor Library, located in East Derry. The Derry Public Library has a collection of more than 85,000 books and a total yearly circulation of almost 200,000 items as of FY 2000. This library also contains 40 computers, internet access, and is part of a nine-library inter-circulation system. It offers a variety of special programs, crafts, and children's services, and houses a local historical collection of materials. As of 1999, the Library met at least eight out of ten criteria on a state library checklist for compliance with the Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA), addressing such issues as access, parking, wheelchair accessibility for persons with disabilities. As of the writing of this Plan, the Derry Public Library foresees no immediate need for additional space or facilities in the next few years.

The Taylor Library, however, is in need of renovation and expansion to bring the facility into compliance with ADA, enabling both library access, use, and restrooms for use by handicapped persons. There is a need to separate children and adult services and facilities in this library, as well as to provide additional workspace. As of the writing of this Plan, the Taylor Library is in the process of quantifying and specifying its needs for additional space and improvements.

Cemeteries

Derry contains one cemetery – Forest Hills – consisting of between 28-32 acres, and located at the northwest corner of East Derry Road and Cemetery Road. The Forest Hills Cemetery is of historic significance to Derry and dates back to the 1700s. The Facilities Director estimates that this cemetery’s capacity will be met as of the year 2003. The Town is examining alternatives for additional burial space as of the writing of this Plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Derry’s goals for community facilities are to:

- Assure that there is a continuing link between Derry’s provision of municipal services, capital investment, and appropriate level of community growth.
- Continue to maintain a balance between appropriate service provision, community investment, and a moderated tax rate.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following actions are identified to implement Derry’s goals for community facilities:

Complete physical renovations underway:

- Complete the development of the Town services complex, consolidating existing Town offices with planning, code enforcement, public works administration, and other services as appropriate. Explore future consolidation possibilities such as with school administration.
- Explore the possibility of including the historic museum and a restaurant in the completed Adams Memorial Building cultural and arts center. Continue to explore possibilities for user parking.

Study and pursue additional facility needs:

- Complete the study of alternative locations for fire and ambulance service with the objective to service all locations of town in an appropriate response time.

- Establish a task force to evaluate the possible consolidation at one location of dispatch communications for fire, ambulance, police, and emergency management operations.
- Continue to explore alternatives for expansion of the existing transfer station or construction of a new facility.
- Pursue alternatives for development of a teen center. Assist the Facilities and Recreation Department in exploring alternatives for expanding or transforming existing facilities.
- Pursue alternatives for location and development of a senior center that would:
 - Accommodate all existing programs, a lunch program, and space for future programming activities;
 - Be overseen by a Town-appointed Council on Aging, who would assist with other community initiatives on behalf of elders.
- Identify the needs for improvements, ADA compliance, and additional space at the Taylor Library, and target and secure needed resources to carry these out.
- Explore alternatives for additional cemetery space in Derry, with the objective to acquire the needed additional capacity by 2003.

Pursue service improvements:

- Continue to explore appropriate uses for the Town-owned Depot, particularly uses that will attract more people to the Downtown.
- Work with the Greater Derry/Greater Salem Regional Transportation Council to develop more transportation alternatives for Derry seniors and handicapped citizens. *[Also in Circulation Element]*
- Consider a municipal program to encourage Derry residents and businesses to reduce their generation of solid waste and increase the amount of recycled materials, such as a “pay-as-you-throw” option.

13, 2000.

Seniors & Historic Preservation Master Plan
Group Report, undated.

Undertake efforts to improve facility planning and communications processes:

- Establish an inter-agency committee to review and monitor capital projects and planning, and to monitor satisfactory progress and completion of initiated public projects.
- Establish ongoing communications between Town growth management administrators and school administrators with regard to planning for growth, as envisioned in the Town's growth management ordinance, with a particular objective of reducing classroom size.
- Integrate consideration of historic significance in public facilities and development decisions through the following:
 - Involving the Heritage Commission in design of new public buildings or razing or altering of existing public buildings;
 - Involving the Heritage Commission in Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment discussions regarding properties with potential historic or cultural significance;
 - Instituting a two-week demolition delay at the request of the Heritage Commission for potentially significant historic or cultural buildings or sites;
 - Consulting the Heritage Commission in the selection of a name for a public building, park, or field.

Ongoing Study:

- Identify the next steps needed in the continuing exploration of changing Derry's status to a city.

REFERENCED MATERIAL

Town of Derry 6-Year Capital Improvements Plan, FY 2002.

Town of Derry 30-Year Capital Improvement Program, FY 2002-2032.

April 9, 2001

APPENDIX

B. "Municipal Services Subcommittee Report", June