

## 5.4 Facilities and Services

### 5.4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this element is to present base line data and analysis relative to Facilities and Services in Exeter. Information on public safety, educational and cultural resources, public works and general government administration is presented to provide an inventory of existing resources and identify future needs for facilities and services used by the public. Key existing services and facilities are delineated on Map 5.4.A.

In broad terms, this element utilizes the following when planning for municipal and related facilities and services:

1. An inventory of existing public facilities and services. This should include all publicly operated facilities and services plus quasi-public and private facilities that provide services to the general public.
2. A general analysis of the effectiveness of each such facility and service, noting any deficiencies in quality of services provided.
3. A forecast of current and future needs for such facilities and services. The forecast should be based upon generally accepted standards of need or on standards developed by the city or town for this purpose and must be in conformity with local goals and policies established to govern the provision of such facilities and services. (*Handbook 16: Comprehensive Plans*, pages IV-27/8)

### 5.4.2 Fire and Rescue Services

The Town of Exeter is provided fire and rescue services through four separate non-profit corporations that contract with the town on an annual basis and by two volunteer fire companies.

Exeter Rescue, incorporated with fire and rescue dispatch of the Exeter Dispatch Center, Inc, provides rescue services.

The town is divided into two districts, each responsibility for its own volunteer units. The New London Turnpike serves as the division running northeast to southwest through the geographic center of the town. This line is not an absolute boundary as mutual support between the two units is provided whenever circumstances arise which require additional equipment and manpower. In fact mutual aid agreements exist between many of the communities in this region for fire protection purposes. The Central Rhode Island Fire District, an association of volunteer fire companies, was established for this purpose. All departments are on call to assist their neighboring departments when the need arises.

#### 5.4.2a Exeter Volunteer Fire Company Number #1

This non-profit corporation is chartered as a private organization managed by its own board of directors. It is not a town department. Its offices are located at 782 Ten Rod Road (Rt. 102) with its primary fire fighting headquarters at 305 Ten Rod Road, on the north side of Rt. 102 across from the Exeter Country Club. The fire station itself is a three bay (double-deep) structure with adjoining meeting and kitchen facilities.

As a volunteer unit, there are no set shifts as with full-time fire departments. Volunteers are on call 24 hours per day, seven days per week to respond in the case of fire emergency. This company responded to 114 alarms in 1989.

#### 5.4.2b Exeter Volunteer Fire Company #2

This fire company is also chartered as a private non-profit corporation. Its fire fighting headquarters are located on the east side of Route 3, Nooseneck Hill Road, just south of Ten Rod Road near the Route 165 intersection. The fire station itself is located on a 4-acre site with two buildings. The main fire headquarters building is a four-bay, single depth structure. Also on the site is a "Quonset Hut" utilized for storage purposes.

The fire company also has a second site on Woody Hill Road. This two bay station is located in the western part of town primarily to have equipment in this area to fight brush and forest fires. The equipment is also available for other fire fighting purposes.

This company covers approximately 22.5 square miles of area with a large portion of the service area being state owned land in Arcadia Management Area and Beach Pond. As with the previous Fire Company, all members are volunteers and on call 24 hours per day. The Chief is the only paid member of the force.

#### 5.4.2c Rescue Services

Rescue services are provided by Exeter Rescue, Inc. a volunteer organization established in 1986 as a non-profit corporation. Located adjacent to Town Hall on Route 102, this rescue company provides service to the entire town.

In 1990 this service employed 2 full-time people who work 5 days per week, 10 hours per day with volunteers covering the balance of the weekday hours and weekends. In November 1990, the rescue company was granted Advanced Life Support Status, a significant achievement for the force. Staff personnel for two rescue vehicles are on duty at all times. The Hope Valley Volunteer Fire Company, through subscription to Exeter residents, also provides rescue service to the Town. Western Exeter residents are typical users of this service given their close proximity of that station.

#### 5.4.2d The Exeter Emergency Dispatch Center, Inc

This center at 669 Ten Rod Road was established in September of 1989 as the main dispatch center for fire and rescue services. Prior to the establishment of this center, volunteers were responsible for dispatching public safety equipment.

This non-profit corporation has four full-time employees providing coverage 24 hours per day. The Center employees work on a four-day shift schedule that includes two 10-hour days and two 14-hour nights and four days off. They have had to service approximately 400 calls since their establishment. All emergency calls for fire and rescue are received at this facility.

#### 5.4.2e Service Evaluation/Issues

In general, rural fire fighting's most critical needs are access to water sources, adequate personnel and the ability to get water to a fire as quickly as possible. Initial response time is critical. A general standard in the fire protection handbook prepared by the National Fire Protection Association is to have one pumper truck per four-mile radius in rural areas. Another source, "Principles and Practices of Urban Planning," indicates that the goal for a small community is to be able to handle two fires of moderate intensity simultaneously.

The major issues identified by the two volunteer fire companies were as follows:

- Maintaining an adequate fire force.
- Updating and maintaining the 911 system emergency response.
- Access to water sources/easements.
- Response time difficulties due to poor access on some local roads.
- General coordination with the Planning Board as it relates to fire fighting needs/concerns with respect to subdivision development.
- The number of dead-end street and cul-du-sacs.
- General fire code compliance.
- Compliance with Right to Know - SARA.
- Route 95 vehicle fires- the unknown.
- Need for dry hydrants/underground storage tanks.
- On-going recruitment, education, and training process to maintain an adequate fire complement.

#### 5.4.3 Police Coverage

Police protection for the Town of Exeter is provided by the RI State Police. The town does not have its own police department and is now the only municipality in Rhode Island that does not have full time municipal police protection.

Two State Police barracks cover the town. They are Hope Valley and Wickford. According to the State Police, Gardner Road is the dividing point with the Wickford Barracks covering the area to the east and the Hope Valley Barracks the area to the west. There are fifteen troopers stationed at each of these two stations, which cover a number of towns.

Both barracks provide full police services from traffic control to detective services. Each barracks has an average of four vehicles on the road in their respective areas until 9:00 PM in the evening. At present, troop strength is not at maximum capacity but is expected to increase in the near future with the graduation of a new class from the RI training academy.

#### 5.4.3a Service Evaluation/Issues

The two major concerns expressed by State police related to speeding and housebreaks. Both barracks are aware that Exeter is without its own police force and has indicated that they tend to provide preferential treatment to the town as a result of this situation.

Most recently the State Police have begun to work with the town and establish a neighborhood watch program to try to deter housebreaks and other local crime activity. A satellite station has also been established by the State Police in a trailer in the parking lot of the Town Clerk's Office.

#### 5.4.4 Emergency Management

In the event of a large emergency, Exeter relies on several resources including the State Police, the volunteer fire and rescue services. If an emergency, such as a forest fire, involves State property located in Exeter, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and the Rhode Island National Guard are available to assist.

#### 5.4.5 Educational Resources

##### 5.4.5a Public Schools

The Town of Exeter is served by the Exeter/West Greenwich Regional School District. The District School Committee is made up of representatives from the two towns that appoint a Superintendent and establish the budget for the district. The budget is presented at a Financial School Meeting for approval and then forwarded to the respective towns for their approval.

The following table lists the schools within the system, their street address, and the grades covered.

Table 5.4.A  
Exeter/West Greenwich School District Facilities

<u>School</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Grades Covered</u>
Exeter/West Greenwich Jr./Sr. High School (built 1990)	930 Nooseneck Hill Road West Greenwich	Grades 7 - 12
Metcalf School (built 1967, addition 1990)	30 Nooseneck Hill Road Exeter	Grades 2 - 6
Lineham School/ Administration (built 1950)	859 Nooseneck Hill Road West Greenwich	K/ Pre-School Special Ed
Wawaloam (built 1952)	100 Victory Highway Exeter	Grade 1

*Source: Exeter/West Greenwich Regional School District*

#### 5.4.5b Public School Enrollment

Total primary and secondary enrollment for the Exeter/West Greenwich system was 1,417 as of September 1990. This figure did not include 11th and 12th grade students attending North Kingstown Schools. There are approximately 180, 11th and 12th grade students in that system at the present time. The figures presented are for public schools only. Enrollment information for Exeter students attending Catholic Diocesan Schools will also be presented.

Table 5.4.B  
Enrollment Profile Exeter/West Greenwich School Population (1990)

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Total Enrollment</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
K	118	7%
Pre-School	6	1%
1-6	825	52%
7-8	210	13%
9-10	257	16%
11-12	180	11%
Sub-Total	1596	100%

*Source: Exeter/West Greenwich Regional School District*

#### 5.4.5c Projected School Enrollment

Two sets of enrollment projections have been developed for the schools. One was developed by the Superintendent's office through Fiscal Year 1992-1993 for grades K-12, while a second estimate was developed by the State Department of Education through Fiscal Year 1998-1999. The states projections are for grades K-8 only and do not include the senior high school grades.

#### 5.4.5d Service Evaluation/Issues

The Exeter/West Greenwich School District is in the process of completing an extensive facilities improvement and expansion program that has seen renovations and additions being made to two schools in the district in addition to the opening of a new Jr./Sr. High School. Given the extensive work that has taken place, it is apparent that the condition of the existing physical plant is excellent for many years to come.

With respect to future projections, however, there appears to be the real potential for space shortage in the Metcalf School within the next five years as populations approach the design capacity of the building. The same problem may be facing the Lineham School with regard to Kindergarten populations. Such does not appear to be the case with the new Jr./Sr. High School, which has extensive reserve capacity for the foreseeable future. A full analysis of the potential to utilize existing unoccupied space in new or vacant buildings or the reorganization of the existing grade structure to accommodate such grow is required almost immediately. Currently, schools are responsible for over 70% of the Town's budget and is rising. This will impact the delivery and potential expansion of other Town services.

#### 5.4.6 Public Library

The Manton Free Public Library is located on Ten Rod Road (Route 102). The Library's allotted space consists of approximately 450 square feet of space, utilized mainly for the shelving of books. The present site of the Library is to the east of the geographical center of town and is easily accessed by all residents within the community.

The library is open during regular Town Hall hours (Monday through Friday, 9am to 4pm). However, staffed hours are limited to Tuesday (3pm to 5pm), Thursday (3pm to 5pm) and Saturday - 1:30pm to 4:30pm. During non-staffed hours people are encouraged to utilize the library facility. It operates on the honor system and patrons are asked to leave a note when borrowing Library material.

The Library personnel includes a Librarian who works the majority of the staffed hours and three Library Trustees who work on a scheduled volunteer basis.

#### 5.4.6a Library Collection/Equipment

The Manton Free Public Library has a collection of 13,000 books, periodicals, audiocassettes and recordings. The Library also has a collection of slides depicting an historic overview of the Town of Exeter.

The following is a list of equipment that can be found in the Town's Library:

- Typewriter
- Slide Projector (Town History Slide Show)
- Table with 4 chairs
- Children's Table with 3 chairs
- 2 File Cabinets (Serve as card catalogue)
- Desk with chair
- A Card Catalogue
- Numerous book shelves of various sizes

#### 5.4.6b Services

The Manton Free Library of Exeter, R.I., has a long history of working cooperatively with area schools and educators. For many years it has set up and even delivered materials to classroom libraries. It has furnished reading programs and various enrichment materials for school children. It has supplemented school libraries when their collections were overtaxed by special and seasonal demands.

#### 5.4.6c Patronage/Circulation

The library serves approximately 700 individuals and organizations per year. While most people come from Exeter, other people use the Library, particularly those from West Greenwich. In regards to circulation, approximately 8,000 items (primarily books) were taken out from the Manton Free Public Library.

#### 5.4.6d Service Evaluation/Issues

The library is suffering from a severe lack of space. For a town of Exeter's size, it is recommended by the American Library Association that a library facility have at least 3,500 square feet of space with a minimum of 500 square feet for reading space alone (based on a population of 5,000). The current facility contains 450 square feet in total floor area. While the library does have a significant collection of books and other materials the space limitations severely hamper attempts to increase library holdings.

#### 5.4.7 Highway Department/Solid Waste Management

##### 5.4.7a Highway Department

The Town of Exeter's Highway Department is located on South County Trail in the vicinity of the town fair grounds. The site contains 80 acres of land and a ten year-old garage. The facility has three working bays and is in excellent condition.

##### 5.4.7a.1 Personnel

The Highway Department consists of six full-time workers. It includes the Highway Supervisor with the other five employees being equipment operators and maintenance people. Presently, there are no plans to expand the Highway Department.

##### 5.4.7a.2 Services Provided

Exeter's Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of all town roads. Gravel roads in town are graded an average of one to five times per year. However, some heavily used roads are graded more frequently due to the high level of usage of these roads. Approximately \$40,000 per year is spent on the repair of local roads. The town also provides Snow plowing of town streets.

The Highway Department also provides general maintenance and management services both at the Transfer Station and Town Hall. They recently assisted in the paving of the Town Hall parking lot.

##### 5.4.7a.3 Service Evaluation/Issues

The maintenance of local roads is an expensive and time-consuming process, particularly in a rural community with both asphalt and gravel roads. A system of regular maintenance is required to ensure that these roads are maintained to provide regular service to local residents, school buses and emergency vehicles.

The town does not have a formal road management program that would help in establishing a regular maintenance cycle of roads and drainage structures. Also, as the town grows, local roads are required to serve a function well beyond their original design capacity. The upgrading of roads could also be included in such a management program. Also, coordination with nearby towns to discuss maintenance alternatives will also be helpful.

##### 5.4.7b Solid Waste Management

The Town of Exeter operates a licensed Transfer Station on a ten-acre site just east of the Blueberry Hill Store on Route 102. The site is leased from a private party and includes the location of the former town landfill. At present, the site costs the town \$350 per month to lease the site.

The transfer station that occupies two acres of the ten-acre site; is managed by town employees (3) while the refuse brought to the site is hauled to the state landfill in Johnston by a private firm under contract with the town. The contractor provides 5-6 disposal bins at the site for waste disposal, each with a capacity of fifty yards. Residents can either bring their waste directly to the transfer station or have it collected by a private contractor for disposal at the site.

Residents of the town are charged \$25.00 for using the transfer station. They are issued a sticker by the town for their own vehicle. The transfer station is open three days per week, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

The transfer station also accepts white goods (stoves/refrigerators) for a \$2.00 charge and other large items such as couches, mattresses, etc. The white goods are recycled by the town; then sold to an outside vendor. Residential demolition material is also accepted at the site.

The Town has a recycling program at the transfer station, which was started in 1993 to reduce the amount of solid waste being sent to the landfill.

#### 5.4.7b.1 Waste Volume

The Rhode Island Solid Waste Management Corporation (RISWMC) sets a cap for each community with respect to the estimated waste volume a town is allowed to deposit at the state landfill at the residential disposal rate. Volumes beyond that cap are charged at the substantially higher commercial rate of disposal. The cap is based on the town's known or estimated population, which is established by the RISWMC. Volumes below this cap are charged at the municipal "Tipping Fee" of \$32 while volumes above it are charged the commercial rate of \$45.00/ton.

The tonnage allocation for a town is set using three figures. The first is the amounts of refuse anticipated to be generated by general residential waste based on population. The second factor is the volume of waste anticipated from condominiums. The third factor relates to the trash anticipated from schools. At present the RISWMC assumes a town population of 4,809 (estimate by R.I. Division of Administration). Condominiums are based on 3.5 people per unit. Schools are factored at .227 tons per student.

You will note that the assumed population is 4,809. The 1990 estimated population for the Town of Exeter is 5,333. The RISWMC will use the final census figures to increase or decrease a city or town's waste allocation. Our most recent population estimate based upon construction activity over the last ten years places the town's population closer to 6,000.

Waste volume has been decreased because of the Town's recycling plan, which reduces the amount of solid waste.

#### 5.4.7b.2 Actual Trash Volumes -Town of Exeter

Actual volumes received at the Johnston landfill exceeded the RISWMC cap for the town over the 7/1/89-6/30/90 fiscal year. The total waste received at the landfill was 3,166 tons, 331 tons over the municipal allocation. This volume of waste was charged at the commercial rate of \$49/ton instead of the municipal rate of \$14. The overage figure is somewhat misleading, as demolition debris was not hauled to the RISWMC facility but to another site at a reduced rate.

#### 5.4.7b.3 The Cost of Disposal

The total cost to dispose refuse at the landfill for the fiscal year indicated was \$55,852. This includes waste disposed at the municipal rate and the amount paid at the overage rate. Table 5.4.C provides a summary of the costs.

Table 5.4.C  
Town of Exeter 1989 - Cost of Disposal - RISWMC

2,835 tons@ \$13.98/ton	=	\$39,633 (71%)
331 tons @ 49.00/ton	=	<u>\$16,219 (29%)</u>
Total	=	\$55,852 (100%)

*Source: Town of Exeter*

The town, as Table 5.4.C indicates, expends 29% of its total payment to the RISWMC for tonnage over the cap for 10% of its total waste volume. It is obvious that any reduction in the volume over the municipal cap results in tremendous savings to the town. Also any increase in population from the 1990 census will raise the town's cap based upon the formula previously presented.

#### 5.4.7b.4 Other Costs/Revenues

The tipping fees paid to the RISWMC are only one element of the town's budget for this activity. The town, as previously mentioned, leases the transfer site from a private contractor on a monthly basis. Also included in the budget are personnel costs and the cost to have the refuse hauled to the state landfill in Johnston. 5.4.D provides an overview of the solid waste budget.

Table 5.4. D.  
Town of Exeter -Solid Waste Budget

<u>Cost Element</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Hauling Costs (based on \$85/trip x 428 trips)	\$36,380
Tipping Fee	\$55,852
Land Lease (\$350 x 12)	\$ 4,200
Personnel/Other	<u>\$38,852</u>
Total	\$135,000

Source: Town of Exeter

#### 5.4.7b.5 Service Evaluation/Issues

The transfer station appears to provide adequate service for town residents. Most residents, according to Town Officials, indicate that it is convenient for their needs. The volume of material, however, would appear to present a problem with respect to the additional cost associated with volumes that exceed the town's cap for disposal at the municipal rate at the state landfill. An increase in the cap associated with new census figures will help alleviate some of this problem as a net gain in the tonnage cap of 268 tons/year would result (based on 5,333-1990 population). This would all but eliminate the commercial tipping costs, reducing the load at that rate to approximately 43 tons.

There is some concern that commercial trash and out of town trash is finding its way to the landfill, which again would result in the potential for exceeding the town cap. Commercial waste from town residents with town transfer station stickers is part of the problem.

What is apparent is the need for the town to reduce in some way the volume of waste arriving at the transfer station. The State may force this issue in the near future as they prepare to refuse yard waste from being brought to the landfill. To deal with this and other needs regarding waste management, the town will have to consider investigating the following:

- Composting yard/garden waste
- Expansion of recycling program
- Ordinance amendments to clearly distinguish resident waste from commercial waste
- Stronger policing of waste brought to the station

## 5.4.8 General Government Administration

### 5.4.8a Municipal Offices and Facilities

There are two primary municipal facilities in the town. The primary facility is the Town Clerk's Office, a one-story wood-framed building located at 675 Ten Rod Road. The facility is located on a 1.6-acre parcel of land at the corner of Widow Sweets Road and Route 102. This facility, of approximately 2,500 square feet, houses all the Town's local offices including the Tax Collector and Tax Assessors' office. Town meetings are often held in a small meeting chamber in the rear of the building. The structure also serves as the central location of all town records.

The second facility is the Highway Department, located on town-owned land off of South County Trail. The site has a garage facility for the storage and maintenance of highway repair and maintenance equipment.

### 5.4.8b Service Evaluation/Issues

The existing Clerk's Office has outgrown its function as a Town Hall. The offices are cramped and the meeting room is less than adequate for normal meeting purposes. Storage is inadequate for its present function. In general there is a need for a new facility with improved office space, lighting, access, heating, ventilation and general office systems.

The Town had established a Town Hall Committee to search for a site for a new town hall. The committee has retained an architect to determine space requirement for such a structure, including site and building size.

There has been interest expressed by numerous town residents that a town center be established which would include such a facility as its anchor. This was not the original charge of the committee but should be considered before any formal recommendation to the Town Council. In determining a site for either a town center or just a town hall, several things must be considered: the need for such a facility; space requirements (present and future); its location, and its design and future function.

Several locations have been mentioned as a possible site for a town center. The 1974 Comprehensive Plan suggested that the town center be centrally located and easily accessible. The Pine Hill area, near the site of the old town hall, was mentioned as a possible location. Other sites have also been considered such as the Ladd Center, Route 3, Route 102 in the vicinity of the Blueberry Hill Store just east of Pine Hill, and other Route 2 locations.

In general, the selected site for a town center should be convenient to those people who use it most, while also being located near the center of transportation or business activity.

Also, adequate area must be available for such a center with sufficient room for expansion and parking. Other considerations could include environmental sensitivity, traffic, and the ultimate impact such a center will have on the site it is located in. Generally speaking, over the long run, this site could attract service centers that complement its municipal function, such as office use, services, restaurants, etc.

#### 5.4.8c Facilities and Services Budget

The following are budgeted line items associated with the delivering of municipal services and facilities.

Table 5.4.E

Town of Exeter -1990-1991 Budget  
Facilities and Services

<u>Item</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% Total</u>
Librarian/Library	\$9,184.00	<1%
Landfill	136,622.00	4%
Public Works	280,000.00	8%
Highway Garage	5,000.00	<1%
Public Works Equipment	28,000.00	1%
Oiling and Sealing	40,000.00	1%
Building Committee	5,000.00	<1%
Regional Schools	2,801,378.26	77%
Public Safety 3	14,616.00	9%
Public Building Maintenance	18,000.00	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,637,800.26</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Town of Exeter

## 5.4.9 Implementation: Findings, Issues, Goals, And Policies

### 5.4.9a Public Safety

#### 1. Findings

- a) The Town of Exeter is provided fire and rescue services through four separate non-profit corporations who contract with the Town:
  - Exeter Volunteer Fire Company Number 1
  - Exeter Volunteer Fire Company Number 2
  - Exeter Rescue, Inc.
  - Exeter Emergency Dispatch Center, Inc.
- b) Exeter Volunteer Fire Company Number 1 covers the area to the east of the New London Turnpike, approximately 35 square miles, while Exeter Number 2 covers the balance of the town to the west of the New London Turnpike, approximately 23 square miles.
- c) The existing system of fire stations provides adequate coverage for the town with respect to nationally applied standards.
- d) The Exeter Rescue, Inc., provides coverage for the entire town. It has just been awarded advanced life support status, a significant achievement for this service.
- e) The Exeter Dispatch Center provides full-time dispatch services for Fire and Rescue.
- f) A "Tanker Task Force" has been established in this area of the state to bring large volumes of water to a serious fire situation. "Mutual-aid" between communities is common.
- g) The Exeter Volunteer Fire Co. Number 1 has purchased land for a new station in the southeastern section of town on Route 2 to improve service to this growing section of town. The station is now under construction.
- h) The Town of Exeter is the only municipality in the state without its own police force.
- i) Police protection is provided by the State Police from their Wickford and Hope Valley Barracks.
- j) These two barracks cover eleven other communities in addition to Exeter.

- k) There is limited coverage of the town after 9:00 P.M., (one car from each barracks) although the State Police give Exeter special attention due to the lack of a local police department.
- l) Excessive speeding and house break-ins were identified as major concerns at a meeting of town residents with the State Police.

## 2. Issues

- a) The two most critical needs in rural fire fighting are water access and response time.
- b) The maintenance of a full complement of well-trained volunteers for the Volunteer Fire Companies is a continuous concern.
- c) The lack of coordination with other Town boards with respect to fire protection is an ongoing issue.
- d) Water accessibility during the winter months is critical.
- e) Where water resources are located on private property, easements and access rights are needed to insure access.
- f) The number of dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs can effect service delivery.
- g) Route 95 truck fires present a special concern due to the diversity of materials being hauled.
- h) There is a need for manufactured water sources (Dry Hydrants - underground storage tanks).
- i) What is the level of satisfaction with the service provided by the State Police?
- j) Does the town feel it needs its own police department and if so, how would it be funded?
- k) Crime is becoming an increasing concern for local residents.
- l) Home alarm companies need to be controlled to ensure consistent alarm reporting standards.
- m) The expanded use of wood burning stoves in the town increases their potential as a fire hazard if they are not regularly maintained or improperly installed.

- n) The 911 System has been raised as needing evaluation and improvement.
- o) The Town does not have adequate animal control facilities.

### 3. Goals

- a) Continue to support the efforts of our Volunteer Fire Companies to provide the best possible service to the Town.
- b) Ensure that the Town, its residents, business and industry are afforded the best public safety services possible.
- c) The Town should create an emergency management plan with the assistance of the RI Emergency Management Agency.
- d) Encourage innovative approaches to the provision of improved fire and police service.

### 4. Policies

- a) Continue to include Emergency 911 coordinator responsibilities in Tax Assessors' Clerk's job description for the continual updating of Exeter's Emergency 911 system in accordance with the Town's "Ordinance Establishing a Uniform System for the Numbering of Buildings and Lots."
- b) The town should continue to rely on volunteer fire protection, supported by volunteer staff and cost-effective financial support by the Town.
- c) Continue support of both the Exeter Emergency Dispatch and Exeter Rescue.
- d) Require the installation of water storage facilities where access to water is difficult. Also, require the provision of easements in subdivisions to provide permanent access to water sources. Require developers to install Dry Hydrants to fire company specifications.
- e) Continue to rely on State Police protection. Evaluate annually, and should the need arise, consider alternatives such as: the establishment of a Town Police Force; Subcontract services from an adjacent community; Investigate the potential for a regional police force with one or more communities.
- f) Encourage the expansion of Neighborhood Crime Watch Program.

- g) Explore the need for a Town operated or regional animal control facility and related ordinances.

#### 5.4.9b Education

##### 1. Findings

- a) The Town of Exeter is served by the Exeter/West Greenwich Regional School District. At present, all grades attend schools within this system.
- b) Four schools make up the system including the new Jr./Sr. High School.
- c) Present school enrollment now stands at 1,597.
- d) The grade 1-6 population will grow significantly over the next 10 years. Enrollments will surpass 900 students, the capacity of the expanded Metcalf School, by the 1992-93 school year.
- e) The Kindergarten population, according to the Superintendent, will increase 70% over the next two years to close to 200 students. State projections are somewhat less.
- f) The grade 7-8 groups will experience the greatest percentage growth and is expected to grow 104% by the 1998-99 school year. This growth is not expected to exceed the capacity of the new Jr./Sr. High School.

##### 2. Issues

- a) The increasing K-6 population will tax existing facilities in the near future creating the need for additional space.
- b) If new facilities are required to deal with expanded populations should the regional system might consider expanding Metcalf and Lineham or building a new facility
- c) The school system is still finishing a major capital improvement project and is now faced with the prospect of additional capital improvement requirements.
- d) State laws limiting class sizes for special education students and other state mandated programs and services place additional space pressures on existing facilities.
- e) A Growth Management Ordinance, as described in the Growth Management report in Appendix A of this plan, is one method of insuring the Town's ability to meet the educational needs of its citizens.

### 3. Goals

- a) Meet the future demands for space in the most cost effective way possible.
- b) Continue to provide the highest quality of education possible to all residents in the district, as education is not limited to K-12 grade students.
- c) Plan for the future needs of the school population on a regular and ongoing basis.

### 4. Policies

- a) Encourage the governing body of the Exeter/West Greenwich School District to continue development and implementation of a Strategic Plan to guide the future direction of the school system. The Plan should address these five elements: Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Goal Setting, Development of a Plan of Action, Implementation Plan and Evaluation of Program once Underway.
- b) Adopt a Growth Management Ordinance, based on the Growth Management report in Appendix A, to ensure that residential growth can proceed equitably and fairly and does not outpace the Town's ability to provide services, particularly education.

#### 5.4.9c Public Library

##### 1. Findings

- a) The Manton Free Public Library located in the Town Hall is the only public library in Exeter.
- b) The library has a collection of 13,000 books, periodicals, audiocassettes and recordings, including a collection of slides that depict the history of the Town.
- c) The Library serves approximately 700 individuals per year.
- d) The Library's current circulation is now at approximately 8,000 items per year.
- e) The current size of the Library within Town Hall is inadequate for the size of the Town and its service population.

##### 2. Issues

- a) The severe lack of space limits the potential of this Library as an asset to the community.

- b) There is a need to modernize and improve Library services to meet the Town's increasing population.
- c) There is not enough space to adequately house the Library's holdings or accommodate more than a few patrons at a time.

### 3. Goals

- a) Improve library services and facilities.
- b) Help improve the Manton Free Library as a cultural asset to the community.
- c) Recognize the current and future needs of this facility.

### 4. Policies

- a) Modernize and improve library services currently being provided by the Manton Free Public Library.
- b) Conduct a needs-assessment to understand the amount and types of space, equipment and facility that Exeter Library will need in the future. With this needs-assessment, the Library and the Town can make sound decisions about where the library may expand or build a new facility. Part of this needs-assessment should be facility for Exeter's elderly population.
- c) Consult with the Manton Library Trustees to consider expansion of Town Library into the remaining Town Hall space in the event that a new Town Hall is constructed.
- d) Consult with Town Librarian and the Manton Library Trustees regarding storage of historic artifacts at the Library.
- e) Explore the possibilities of forming a regional facility with adjacent communities.

#### 5.4.9d Highway Department

### 1. Findings

- a) The Highway Department is housed in a relatively new facility on a large tract of town-owned land on South County Trail.

- b) The maintenance of the Town's extensive roadway system places severe demands on the Highway Department.
- c) Approximately \$40,000 per year is spent on road repairs and maintenance.
- d) The Highway Department manages the Town's transfer station.
- e) The Town's existing roadway system was not designed to accommodate current traffic volumes.

## 2. Issues

- a) General road maintenance is typically found to be a concern to local residents.
- b) There are a number of town roads that require substantial improvement.
- c) Significant drainage problems also exist at various locations throughout the Town.

## 3. Goals

- a) To improve local roads and drainage in a systematic manner throughout the Town.
- b) Coordinate early and often with the RIDOT to ensure the best results with respect to state-funded projects.

## 4. Policies

- a) Establish and maintain a Roadway Management Program that prioritizes and schedules roadway/drainage improvements according to an established set of criteria. Evaluate alternatives to current road maintenance practices to determine the feasibility of improving maintenance on a systemwide basis.
- b) Involve the Highway Supervisor in the Site Plan Review process.
- c) Evaluate adopting an "Impact Fee" for new developments to help support the need to improve existing roads servicing new developments. (Please see General Recommendations in Future Facilities Plan, Section 5.4.10b.)
- d) Re-evaluate present road design standards. Please see Section 5.6.9b-5 of the Circulation Element for suggested roadway widths.
- e) Require the use of drainage mechanisms in new developments to reduce flow and the effects of "Non-Point Source Pollution." Such structures would include retention/detention basins, sumps in catch basins, overland flow (level spreaders). Require no increase in net-runoff from new developments.

#### 5.4.9e Solid Waste Management

##### 1. Findings

- a) The town operates a transfer station on leased land just east of the Blueberry Hill Store.
- b) The town contracts with a private hauler to transfer refuse from the station to the State landfill in Johnston.
- c) Residents are currently charged to use the landfill, which is open three days per week.
- d) The Town generated 3,166 tons of trash during the last fiscal year. This figure exceeded the municipal cap established by the R.I. Solid Waste Management Corporation (RISWMC).
- e) Any volumes above the cap, which is established based on the Town's population, number of condos and school population, is charged at the commercial rate of \$49 per ton as opposed to the municipal rate of \$14 per ton.
- f) The tonnage overage cost the town \$16,219 last year or 29% of its disposal cost for 10% of the volume disposed.
- g) The Town's total solid waste budget is approximately \$135,000 per year, which includes hauling costs, tipping fees, land lease and personnel costs.

##### 2. Issues

- a) Volumes over the municipal cap result in a 250% increase in tipping fees at the landfill.
- b) There is some concern that commercial trash is being dumped to the transfer station, further impacting on the excess tipping fees.
- c) The state is expected to refuse yard waste (leaves/clippings, etc.) at the State Landfill in the near future.
- d) What is the potential for enhancing recycling in Exeter.
- e) The Town does not have a waste management plan in place that analyzes solid waste management from a cost/benefit and enforcement standpoint.

### 3. Goals

- a) Continue to provide a clean, well-run solid waste management facility for Town residents.
- b) Investigate innovative waste management techniques including recycling and composting.
- c) Prepare a long-range solid waste management plan for the community.

### 4. Policies

- a) Investigate innovative waste management and reduction techniques including expanding the recycling program and composting to reduce disposal costs and overages.
- b) Develop a solid waste management plan to study the following:
  - Develop a suitable composting site
  - Use material as a soil enhancer for sale or use on municipal facilities
  - Continue charging a fee for general disposal
  - Expand recycling
  - Develop ordinances to deter the disposal of commercial waste
  - Monitor waste volumes in terms of volume, type, etc
  - Develop back-up information to petition RISWMC for cap increase
  - The Solid Waste Management Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis

## 5.4.9f Municipal Facilities

### 1. Findings

- a) The existing town hall is located on Route 102 at the intersection of Widow Sweets Road. It is located on a 1.6-acre site. The building is approximately 2,500 sq. ft. in size.
- b) The existing facility houses town governmental services and the Manton Free Library.
- c) The present building is inadequate as a town hall from a number of perspectives. It is too small to effectively provide governmental services. It does not effectively accommodate existing staff or provide adequate space for town meetings. It is not accessible to the handicapped by current accessibility standards. It needs significant improvements in terms of modernization of heating, electrical and ventilation

systems. It is not an appropriate structure for the storage of town records or other documents of significance.

- d) Its present location is apparently convenient to 82% of town residents who completed the Comprehensive Plan survey.
- e) The Town has established a Town Hall committee to search for a site for a new town hall. They have investigated several locations for a site to accommodate a new facility. The committee has solicited the services of an architect to determine the potential size of such a facility.
- f) The Highway Supervisor's facility is more than adequate for that function.

## 2. Issues

- a) The charge of the Town Hall Committee did not include a search for a site that might accommodate a town center as part of the overall design.
- b) The location of a new town hall or center should be part of the comprehensive planning process for the community in the facilities and services element.
- c) The location of a new town hall should be considered within the context of developing a town center with associated uses.
- d) If the town hall is to be located in a town center, other sites should be considered that could also accommodate such a site.
- e) The location of the new town hall should be decided after the comprehensive plan surveys have been reviewed to gather the opinion of the general public as to the best location and the function such a facility should serve.
- f) The design of a new town hall should set an architectural standard for the community.

## 3. Goals

- a) To develop a town hall and an associated town center that will enhance and complement the rural character of the town, while providing adequate facilities for the effective management of town business for the convenience of all town residents.
- b) To locate the new town hall at a site that is convenient to the general public and others who utilize the services of such a facility.

- c) To develop a new town hall that will adequately house the town hall function and all of the associated governmental services that could be located there.
- d) Determine the size of a new town hall facility based upon the existing or potential need to provide new services or additional management staff.

#### 4. Policies

- a) Establish rural village centers where appropriate town services, commercial uses and balanced housing could be concentrated. Select sites large enough to provide space for associated uses such as a recreational complex, support services etc.
- b) Consider the full ramifications of the location of a new town hall in terms of the potential impact such a facility may have on surrounding land uses, and initiate zoning controls to protect the integrity of the town hall setting.
- c) Design all new Town facilities with the flexibility to be expanded, should additional space be required in the future.
- d) Construct a new town hall with associated facilities with approval of taxpayers at a financial town meeting.

#### 5.4.9g Water and Sewer

##### 1. Findings

- a) While the town does not have its own water or sewage collection or treatment system, such systems do exist on the Ladd Center property which the town has expressed an interest in acquiring.
- b) The disposal of wastewater through inadequately maintained or failing on-site disposal systems can adversely impact the Town's drinking water supply.
- c) Small lot developments such as that found in Cedar Grove and around Boone Lake can threaten water resources and drinking water supplies.
- d) The extension of water and/or sewer lines to areas of small lot development could prevent the pollution of the Town's groundwater supplies.
- e) An unimproved Ladd Center wastewater treatment facility could adversely affect surface water and groundwater supplies.

##### 2. Issues

- a) The continuing failure of on-site disposal systems threatens the water supply of those residents in the immediate vicinity of such systems and others in the general area of such failures.
- b) Should the town try to acquire the water facilities at Ladd for the purpose of starting its own municipal system?
- c) Are there further measures that the town can take to protect its water supply and that of areas that lie to the south of the town as well.
- d) Recognize the protection of the town water supply as a regional issue.

### 3. Goals

- a) Develop a long-range water/wastewater management program for the town that ensures the protection of the town's water supply, while evaluating alternatives relative to the future sources of this resource and their long-term protection.
- b) Recognize adequate wastewater treatment as a major element in the town's groundwater protection plan.
- c) Evaluate all threats to groundwater protection and provide adequate controls to prevent negative environmental impacts.

### 4. Policies

- a) Develop a Water/Wastewater Management Program that evaluates the following:
  - The need for special districts such as Wastewater Management (i.e., Boone Lake) and Well Head Protection areas.
  - Institution of local regulatory controls or mechanisms to enhance or exceed current state controls in terms of water supply (aquifer) protection.
  - Project the future needs/demands for water and wastewater services and provide means to meet those needs.
  - Determination of areas to be served by systems in terms of their priority with respect to environmental protection.
  - Educate the public in terms of the importance of maintaining sewage disposal systems. Take all necessary steps to protect the Groundwater Resources of the Town, including those resources located on and under State land.
  - The Town should negotiate for septage disposal at the Port Authority Quonset Facility or other accepted facilities.

- b) Recognize the Ladd Center water supply as a potential resource to the town. Actively pursue town control of this facility in the future as the basis for a town-operated system.
- c) Continue to identify and secure sites that could function as potential water sources for a town-operated water system. Control, through purchase, lease or other means, the future development of these sites.

#### 5.4.10 Future Facilities & Services Plan

##### 5.4.10a Overview

The future Facilities and Services element presents recommendations with respect to seven areas of public service in the community. No new services are recommended at this time, although the consideration for new or expanded services is suggested, in the future as well as recommendations where improvements can be made in the delivery of existing services. The future funding of services is also addressed, with respect to the cost associated with the demands placed on services by new or expanded development.

What has become apparent is the difficulty in continuing to provide services to town residents supported only with tax dollars. Ever-increasing costs, particularly those associated with education, have had a dramatic impact on the tax rate, and subsequently on the cost of living in the town. Also, as the tax rate rises, so does the taxpayers demands for improved or new services. While Exeter is still in many ways a rural community, there is a need, given the growth the Town has experienced over the last ten years in particular, to improve services to the Town's expanding population, while making plans now for the future population of the Town.

The following provides recommendations for future public services and facilities. Given the nature and scope of the Comprehensive Plan, these recommendations will, in some cases, be general in nature and in many cases will indicate a need for further study or evaluation on the part of the Town.

In fact, for a growing community like Exeter, planning for the future needs of the Town will be an ongoing process, requiring a substantial commitment on the part of the Town of volunteer time or professional assistance. It is recommended that the Town consider funding a full time planning position to address this need.

##### 5.4.10b General Recommendations

There are two recommendations that fall in the "general" category of recommendations due to the fact that they are applicable to more than one category of public service.

These recommendations relate to the imposition of an "Impact Fee," and the updating of a "Development Plan Review Process."

### Impact Fee

It is recommended that the town adopt and implement an "Impact Fee" ordinance to assess developers for their fair share of the costs to be incurred by the town as a result of the new development. New development places an additional burden on the town in terms of the need to provide its new residents with an education, adequate recreational opportunities, safe roads, quality library services, adequate waste disposal systems, public safety services and efficient town government. Typically, as new development occurs, the developed property is added to the tax rolls and the new residents are taxed to contribute their fair share to support the delivery of services. Generally speaking, the property taxpayers do not contribute enough money, nor can they, to support the need for expanded services to these individuals. The end result is that the Town must increase the tax rate or seek bonding approval to cover these costs.

The purpose of an Impact Fee is to cover the cost of capital improvements required as a result of new development. A fair share assessment is required for each new development. To institute an Impact Fee requires that an in-depth analysis be undertaken to determine the actual need for and cost of the new services or facilities generated as a result of a new development. The analysis must be complete and based on a clearly defined program of study starting with an inventory of existing facilities to determine the surplus or deficiency with respect to the level of existing services. This is typically followed by a determination as to the future needs for facilities in town based upon "Buildout." The cost associated with the development of new facilities is determined, and finally a formula of cost application is developed.

The feasibility analysis conducted as the basis for imposing an impact fee must be thorough and well documented, as several impact fee ordinances have been struck down by the courts due to the lack of a firm basis for charging the fee. An excellent example of a feasibility study is the one developed by the City of Cranston Planning Commission staff. Responsibility for developing such an ordinance would be for the following Town leaders, working in coordination with a professional planner who could help assure that the final Impact Fee structure can withstand legal challenges. In addition, the on-going implementation of the impact fee program must be professionally staffed for consistency and legal defensibility.

***Administrative Responsibility:** Planning Board, Superintendent of Schools, Fire and Rescue Officials, Highway Supervisor, Librarian, Recreation Director, and Town Council*

### Development Plan Review

It is recommended that the Town adopt a Development Plan Review process. This was created under the Land development and Subdivision Review Enabling Act (RIGL 45-

24-49) and allows the Town to incorporate this process into its Zoning Ordinance and then into the Planning Board's regulations for the process of review. These specific regulations relate to submission requirements and administrative procedures. Details with regard to site development standards, environmental protection, soil erosion, drainage, signage and the general request for plans and other data are included as part of the ordinance. The Planning Board is charged with this Development Plan Review process, but also receives input from others who have a particular area of expertise with respect to development or who can provide valuable information such as the local public safety officials, school department, building officials, Conservation Commission, and Highway Supervisor.

*Administrative Responsibility: Planning Board, Town Council, and Building Inspector*

#### 5.4.10c Public Safety

The evaluation of the Public Safety function led to several conclusions. Although police protection was rated as fair to inadequate by those responding to the Comprehensive Plan Survey the Town should continue to rely on State Police service for the meantime, until financing is available to support some other level of service. To help prevent crime on the local level, expand the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program to more areas within the Town. Continued financial support is recommended for the volunteer fire, rescue, and dispatch services to maintain the excellent level of service provided by these agencies. To further support the efforts of the volunteer fire fighting force, require the installation of fire prevention support structures to aid in the fighting of fires where water access is a problem.

##### Improved 911 Staffing

The maintenance of an up to date, accurate 911 system for a rural community like Exeter is critical to the provision of public safety services in a timely and accurate fashion. Given the rural nature of the town, a missed address can result in the public safety service provider traveling a substantial distance trying to find the injured party, fire location, etc. This can be critical in a life safety situation. To ensure that the Town's system is maintained and updated regularly is a task requiring more than a volunteer effort. It is recommended that the town continues its 911-coordinator position to improve the 911 system in general, including the ordinance and numbering system, while making sure that all properties are on the system. Close coordination with the volunteer fire chiefs and the state coordinator is recommended.

*Administrative Responsibility: Town Council and Planning Board*

##### Continue Financial Support of Fire, Rescue and Dispatch Service Providers

The town should continue to support the financially prudent delivery of these public safety services, including the construction of a new fire fighting facility on Route 2 in

the southern part of the town. The development of this facility will serve to provide coverage to an area that falls outside of the service radius normally recognized in national standards. This area of the town has also seen significant development over the last ten years and will be the focus for future development as well.

*Administrative Responsibility: Town Council*

Create an Emergency Management Plan with the assistance of the RI Emergency Management Agency

The Town should create an emergency management plan that covers probable events that will impact Exeter. This plan can detail coordination between agencies, assign responsibilities in emergency scenarios and set up protocols for rehearsals and logistics. The RI Emergency Management Agency has funding available for municipalities to create such plans.

*Administrative Responsibility: Town Council, Public Safety Committee, State Police, Fire and Rescue Units, and School Committee and Administration.*

Require the Installation of Water Storage Tanks and Dry Hydrants

The lack of a town water supply places a tremendous burden on the volunteer fire departments. Access to a water supply is critical to the success of their efforts. In some locations in the town, there are no natural sources of water available that the fire departments can easily access, and they are forced to rely on their abilities to bring water to the fire themselves. Sometimes water exists, but is difficult to access due to winter conditions (ice). To help with this problem, it is recommended that the subdivision regulations be revised to require the installation of Underground Water Tanks and Dry Hydrants. The use of these two items will ensure that water is available to the fire fighting force when needed under any circumstance. The requirement for the installation of these structures would be triggered by the establishment of standards developed by the volunteer fire fighting personnel that would be applied to new developments. If water were not readily accessible, the developer would be required to install one or both of these devices.

*Administrative Responsibility: Volunteer Fire Companies and Planning Board*

Investigate Increases to State Police Protection

It is evident that the majority of people who responded to the Comprehensive Plan Survey did not find the existing level of service provided by the State Police to be adequate. This was not to say that the general abilities of the force were inadequate, but that the area of coverage and manpower limits of the force make it impossible for them to provide the level of service people feel is needed today. While it would be difficult to fund the establishment of a Town-run police force at this time, it is recommended that the Town investigate numerous options with respect to public safety.

These options for the future could include the establishment of an Exeter Police Department or having Resident State Troopers assigned to the Town or some other structure to provide expanded service. A possible option to be investigated is the viability of a regional police force, where the town could buy into an existing department (i.e., Richmond, S. Kingstown, N. Kingstown or West Greenwich) or purchase services from an adjacent community. The demand will continually rise for increased coverage in the future.

While this evaluation is underway it is also recommended that the town encourage the expansion of the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program and supplement this effort with other educational information on fire safety, burglary protection and techniques, elderly awareness, and drug abuse prevention.

*Administrative Responsibility: Town Council, School Committee, Planning Board*

#### 5.4.10d Education

A review of present enrollment figures and anticipated future enrollment projections show that the existing school system, particularly the elementary grades will continue to grow in the foreseeable future, taxing the capacity of the Lineham and Metcalf Schools. In the next few years the capacity of these facilities will be reached, according to the projections made by the Superintendent of the school system. Immediate action is required to deal with this situation.

#### Develop a Strategic Plan for the School System

The Town should support the "Steering Committee" that has begun the process of developing the strategic plan to address future facility needs. Members from the following groups should be included on the committee:

- School Committee
- Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent
- Building Official
- Teachers
- Non-Certified Staff Members
- Students
- Elected Representatives
- Business Leaders
- The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
- Parents
- Community Based Organizations
- Planning Board

The plan to be developed would evaluate existing and future facility needs, explore options for facility use and/or development, set goals, develop an action and implementation plan. This should be done with input from parents and students. A strict timeline must be established to ensure that the plan is accomplished in a timely fashion. A six-month timeline is recommended. Options to be considered would include investigating the use of the Ladd Center, or the development of a totally new facility, preferably in the eastern part of Exeter.

*Administrative Responsibility: Superintendent of Schools, School Committee*

#### 5.4.10e Public Library

The existing town library, located adjacent to the Town Clerk's Office, cannot serve the town's existing population given its current size limitations and the subsequent impact this has on its ability to house an adequate number of books and other publications and at the same time accommodate visitors in comfort. The existing 450 square foot facility is over 3,000 square feet short of that recommended for a town the size of Exeter.

Even with its shortcomings, the library still manages to have a circulation of over 8,000 items per year and was cited in the Comprehensive Plan Survey, as an existing service the population would support for increased funding in the future. Funding for improved library services ranked third behind roads and police in terms of a service people would support for additional funding.

#### Expansion of the Library

Improvements to the library's facilities would certainly make it a more attractive facility for local residents who would be more inclined to visit and utilize the library if it were modernized and expanded. The proper way to commence the process of library expansion is to conduct a needs assessment to evaluate the Town's needs for library programs and services. Plans for expansion are then predicated on the results of this needs assessment. Possible solutions might be to expand into the old Town Hall, as well as to alternatives such as a new facility or a regional facility.

Given the need for a new Town Hall in the not too distant future, it is recommended that once that facility is completed (see Municipal Facilities section) that the existing building be totally rehabilitated and be considered for an expanded library facility. Such improvements might include a complete redesign of the interior of the building and its systems (electrical, heat/air) while being made handicapped accessible. The creation of such a facility would provide the opportunity to expand services to the residents in the town, while increasing the library holdings and other related services. This facility could also serve as the repository for the historical records of the town in a rehabilitated, climatically controlled environment. The present location of the facility is convenient to the largest populations in Town being located in the eastern half of the

town. Coordination of this effort should include working with the State Department of Library Services and the R.I. Historic Preservation Commission to identify potential funding sources other than the local budget. Fundraising activities could also be undertaken to support the development of this facility.

Another possibility is co-location with an educational institution such as the High School.

***Administrative Responsibility:*** *Manton Free Public Library Board of Trustees, and Town Council*

#### Increase Number of Holdings Per Capita

Expand holding per capita to at least 3.8 per person (National Average).

***Administrative Responsibility:*** *Manton Free Public Library Board of Trustees, and Town Council.*

#### 5.4.10f Highway Department

The major recommendations associated with improvements to this functional element of town government is related to the establishment of a Roadway Management System to address future improvements to local roads in a systematic manner, based on a full evaluation of existing conditions, the existing function of the roadway and the potential impact future development will have on the system. Almost two thirds of the people who responded to the Comprehensive Plan Survey found road maintenance to be fair to inadequate. They also cited road maintenance as the number one area where they would support the increased expenditure of town funds to improve local roads. The Roadway Management Program will serve to utilize the limited resources of the town in the best way possible.

A second major recommendation with respect to the Highway Department function relates to a requirement that the design of new and rehabilitated drainage systems be subject to a town policy that recognizes the need to eliminate non-point source pollution. To accomplish this policy, specific stormwater improvement requirements would be made within an officially adopted Stormwater Management Plan, that addresses requirements for new developments, the rehabilitation of existing stormwater systems and specific policies associated with the reconstruction of state roadways in the town.

#### Stormwater Management Plan

A major sub-element of the Roadway Management Program, this Plan would be developed in association with the RIDOT and in concert with the Roadway Management Program to identify a system of required improvements associated with

the need to limit or remove the negative impact drainage can have on local waterways. The plan will include a "Zero-Net Run-off" Policy (no increase in run-off from what occurs at present) for all new developments. The plan will also call for the use of "Best Management Practices" in the design of drainage systems. Refer to DEM booklet for standards.

*Administration Action: Highway Supervisor, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Town Council, and RIDOT*

#### 5.4.10g Solid Waste Management

There are three major elements of concern associated with the present solid waste system in the town. They relate to the following:

- The need to reduce the volume of waste being brought to the facility;
- Controlling the amount of commercial waste;
- The need to expand the existing recycling program and to eliminate yard waste from the waste stream.

The town regularly pays excess fees to the R.I. Solid Waste Management Corporation because it exceeds the volume cap assigned to the Town by that agency. Any reduction in volume will result in the net decrease in these overage payments.

#### Solid Waste Management Plan

To evaluate the above cited problems, it is recommended that the town develop a Solid Waste Management Plan that would deal with the issues previously identified, as well as the existing operation of the transfer station, including its management, funding, use restrictions, etc.

A town wide composting program should be investigated as an integral part of this management plan as yardwaste will not be allowed to be disposed at the state landfill in the future. Composted materials have been used as a soil enhancement material for municipal parks and recreation facilities.

Further evaluations could include petitioning the Rhode Island Solid Waste Management Corporation for an increase in the volume cap applied to the town. In addition, the distribution of educational materials promoting composting and recycling shall be made available.

*Administrative Responsibility: Highway Supervisor, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Town Council*

#### 5.4.10h Municipal Facilities

The Town of Exeter is in dire need of a new Town Hall facility. The existing Clerk's Office, located on Rt. 102, has outlived its function for this purpose. The facility is too small to effectively handle the business of the town, the meeting space is inadequate and the site does not have the potential for expansion to accommodate a facility of the size the town requires. In selecting a new site for such a facility, the Town created a Town Hall Committee to look for an appropriate site and to determine the size of the facility based upon the needs of the town. This is an important element of such a decision because the development of a new Town Hall must be done in such a way as to ensure that such a facility meets the needs of the town now and in the future. It must be designed to have the potential for expansion in the future.

Another critical element relates to the location of such a facility within the context of the Town and the ultimate function it serves in terms of its contribution to the fabric of the community. There has been a wealth of support for the development of a "Town Center," and much discussion has taken place with regard to where such a facility would be located in addition to what other type of uses would be allowed. It has been envisioned that such a facility would be a center of activity in the town, providing in addition to municipal administrative services, recreational opportunities, housing, and village scale support services. Architectural control over the look and feel of the center is critical to ensure that the center is developed in a style consistent with the rural character of the town.

In evaluating potential sites for such a center, several considerations were given extensive consideration. They related to the convenience of such a facility to the residents of the community and those doing business in town, that the center fit into the overall community in terms of its scale and location, and finally that the development of such a center be sensitive to the natural and historic environment.

Numerous locations are being considered including the Ladd Center, Rt. 3, Rt. 102 and Rt. 2. In evaluating these locations for possible sites for a Town Center, certain criteria were developed:

- a. That it be located in an area convenient to the greater part of the town's population
- b. That the site be characterized by development consistent with a town center
- c. The potential for water service (from the Ladd Center) to support more concentrated development
- d. There be an established neighborhood adjacent to this site
- e. It be located near a major intersection or interstate highway system

To begin the process of developing such a town center it is recommended that the original Building Committee be reorganized to include members of the Comprehensive

Plan Advisory Committee, as well as members of the Town Council and Planning Board. Their charge would be to develop a concept plan for the Town Center, with professional assistance, that would lay out the location of town facilities, while identifying locations for support services as well as potential housing locations. The committee would be responsible for developing the design standards to be applied, while investigating options to control the land identified for this use. Included in this investigation would be the potential for bringing public water to this site.

*Administrative Responsibility: Town Hall Committee, Town Council, Planning Board, Conservation Committee, and Historic Commission (See Natural and Cultural Resources Element)*

#### 5.4.10i Water

The preservation of the groundwater supply in the town has been identified as one of the highest priorities of this community. The town's reliance on this natural resource will continue long into the future. To address this issue, one recommendation is presented. Develop a future plan for water availability from the Ladd Center.

#### Water/Waste Water Management Plan

The development of such a plan will serve to address the future needs of the town with respect to its water supply and the treatment of wastewater. The plan will address the potential acquisition or control of existing systems (such as Ladd); the identification and protection of future water sources for the Town; the adoption of ordinances and regulations to control future growth that might impact water resources; and establish the ability to address existing problems where a condition exists that threatens the Town's water supply or that of a particular neighborhood. Major elements of the plan would include:

- An Aquifer Overlay Protection Ordinance
- The Option of Establishing Water/Wastewater Management Districts
- Well Head Protection Standards
- A Plan for Acquiring Sites for Future Water Supply
- The Adoption of More Stringent Controls Over the Installation of On Lot Wastewater Systems in the Town
- An Educational Program on Water Conservation and On-Site System Maintenance

*Administrative Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Town Council.*

### Access to the Ladd Center Water System

The use or control by the Town of the Ladd Center's water system could provide an excellent resource in the future, particularly with respect to the need to provide water to areas where concentrated development exists or future development is anticipated. It could also be used as a resource to promote economic development, where water availability can make a location more attractive to a potential investor. Finally, access to such a system can be used to address a potential threat to the environment, where on site sewage system failures could ultimately impact groundwater resources.

To address these potential situations, it is recommended that the Town, when it is economically feasible, make every effort to utilize this facility in the future as the basis for a town-operated facility. Purchase could be funded by municipal bonds, the Impact Fee, or federal funding (grant or loan) from agencies such as the Farmers Home Administration, the Economic Development Administration (EDA), etc.

If the purchase option is not available due to its rejection by the state, the Town should pursue the use of the system through some other type of arrangement. A potential scenario might be that the town would pay for the installation of water lines to a residential area (i.e., Cedar Grove) where the resident would be charged a user fee based on a given formula. The fee would cover the service provided and the cost of extending the line over time. Such a system could be used to service residential areas, commercial properties, industries, etc.

*Administrative Responsibility: Planning Board, Town Council, and Local Legislators*