

Chapter 6. Facilities, Utilities and Recreation

Introduction

This section of the Master Plan discusses some of the facilities and utilities that serve as infrastructure for provision of some of the basic needs for the Lisbon community. The degree to which these facilities are developed has a significant impact on the quality of life and general character of a community. An important function of town government is to provide residents, businesses and visitors with a level of service that meets the current needs of the populace in an efficient and cost-effective manner. In Lisbon's case, these include public safety (police, fire and EMS), public works (water, sewer, roads, solid waste disposal and cemetery maintenance), schools, recreation and town government operations (Selectmen, property maintenance, and assessment). This chapter of the Master Plan presents an inventory of such facilities and utilities, and any plans or recommendations to expand, improve, or add to an existing facility or service where needed. Included in this chapter are community facilities, facilities provided by others to serve the health care needs of the community and some of the housing needs that are not met by the private market, public utilities provided by the town and others, and recreation facilities available to the Lisbon community.

Community Facilities

Town Hall/Police Station

The administrative services of Lisbon are located in the Town Hall in the village area on School Street. The second floor has a large auditorium style room and offices for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Administrative Assistant and Selectboard. The third floor is currently finished storage space without heat and with minimal



lighting. This contains Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment files and a locked area for storage of old town documents.

This facility is not accessible to many as the offices are located up from the street with steep steps. There are also no handicap accessible restrooms. The office space is adequate for the present but lacks sufficient conference/meeting space. Options are being explored to either rehabilitate this space or relocate town offices to the old Ross Funeral Home at 151 South Main Street in front of the new Fire and EMS station. Rehabbing a hundred year-old building on a tight lot may prove not to be the most cost effective solution. Retrofitting the old Ross Funeral Home itself or using the site to build a new simple town office provide other alternatives to consider.

The Police Department is located in the ground level of the Town Hall. The Town employs three full-time and six part-time officers, including a chief, part-time sergeant, and patrolmen. With the Fire Department now at 153 South Main Street, the office space is adequate for the Police Department and includes a meeting room. The Police Department has two functional police cruisers and a town administrative car. The two vehicle bays are being adapted for use as a sally port and for indoor patrol car storage. Being able to get patrol cars out of the weather will help response times in snowy weather. The station is also being revamped to be more compliant with their IT equipment. Securing their database is an important part of cybersecurity. Having a drive-in bay and booking room that is not accessible to the rest of the Police Department is another very important security measure. The Town maintains a capital reserve fund for future equipment needs. Keeping up with the rapid changes in technology will continue to be important in the future.

Railroad Station

Lisbon Station is a very unique building for the Town of Lisbon. The Station, on the State Register of Historic Places, was beautifully totally restored through a multi-year community effort. Renovations have also included a ramp and accessible restroom.

The Lisbon Main Street headquarters is in the former station master's office. The



meeting room, with a capacity of 32, serves Lisbon Main Street, the Selectboard, Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Board. With routine maintenance such as painting and cleaning, this building should provide another 25 plus years for the Town of Lisbon. Recently the Selectboard has started to change all lighting within the building to LED bulbs. The COVID-19 pandemic has created interest in the capacity to hold hybrid meetings in the future (with groups meeting in person but some members and the public able to participate remotely if desired). This will require an internet connection and a videoconference system. The Town should also look into improving the parking situation. With only room at the Station for a few cars, the remainder park on the state's unimproved rail trail property. This is less than ideal in the dark and in winter months.

Fire and EMS

Fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) are provided by an all on-call, paid, volunteer team. The Fire Department has sixteen members and EMS has 15 members. Some volunteers belong to both



Fire and EMS. Members are from Lisbon, Lyman, Landaff and Bath. The Fire Department covers Lisbon and Lyman and is a member of Twin State Fire Mutual Aid along with 24 other departments in New Hampshire and Vermont. Dispatch services are provided by the Grafton County Sherriff's Department. EMS covers Lisbon and Lyman and is contracted as First Responders to Landaff. EMS calls are about 300 calls per year. The Fire Department receives approximately 150 calls per year. Both the Fire Department and EMS have received increased calls over the past five years.

Like many communities without full-time professional fire and EMS staff, Lisbon faces challenges maintaining an adequate pool of volunteers. This is in part due to shifting demographics toward more senior residents and to increasing training requirements. An EMT for example, in addition to other screening and exams, is required to have 150-190 hours of initial training plus clinical/field requirements and then 48 hours per year of continuing education.

In 2018 townspeople passed a bond to build a new Fire/EMS/EOC station at 153 S. Main Street behind the old Ross Funeral Home. Construction began in the spring and was completed in December 2018. A 66 ft. X 100 ft. building was constructed. The building included four bays at one end and an apparatus bay facing towards Dickinson Street, a locking medicine room, a gear room, a decontamination room, and a 550-foot mezzanine for storage and air refill station. At the other end of building are offices for EOC/EMS/Fire Chief, a radio room, a training Room that includes a videoconference system and a kitchen area. The building was made as energy efficient as possible with all LED lighting and radiant heat in the slab. Currently the Department has one engine, one ambulance, one ladder truck, two tankers, one forestry truck , one six wheeler and an antique 1946 fire truck. All equipment can be housed at the new station. All infrastructure standards are being met with the new building. Future needs include a new air pack refill station and/or a possible mobile refill station. The Town maintains capital reserve funds for Fire and EMS equipment.

Department of Public Works (DPW)

The role of the Lisbon Department of Public Works is to maintain town roadways, as well as water and sewer infrastructure, and make improvements that are necessary to provide safe and convenient services. Road maintenance duties of the Department include road grading, paving, snow removal, drainage improvements and other repairs as they are needed. The Department purchases equipment as approved at Town Meeting and performs most repair and maintenance in- house at the town garage.



The town garage is located on Bath Road just north of Ecology Drive. Four full-time and one part-time employee are responsible for all town roads, and water and wastewater distribution systems. The Department maintains about 64 miles of road, mostly gravel and some paved. The employees also

assist in maintaining public buildings, vehicles and land owned by the Town. The Department of Public Works equipment includes three dump trucks, three pickup trucks, and several pieces of heavy equipment including a grader, a loader, an excavator, a roller and a backhoe. The Town maintains a capital equipment fund for Highway Department equipment.

A new town garage will be needed in the next ten years. The current 4,000 sq. ft. wood with metal roof one story building dates back to the 1940s along with a 900 sq. ft. storage shed. Both were constructed from a collection of old lumber from other construction projects and have little insulation. This prevents snow buildup on the roof, which is helpful in that the roof is not adequately pitched to shed snow and ice, but not the best energy efficient solution. Heating in the main building is provided by an outside wood furnace which is about 15 years old, augmented by propane heaters.

The main building houses the public works office, a restroom, bays for four of the vehicles and a workshop area. Issues arise due to the fact that the several of the town's large trucks cannot fit into the building due to the lack of height and depth of the bays. Some vehicles and the plows have to be kept outside or stored down at the sewer treatment plant shed.

Other buildings on the site include a salt storage shed which can hold about 50% of a typical winter's need, a fuel shed which does have 100% containment area in case of spills. These buildings were constructed about 25 years ago.

Since the Town has made the significant investment in purchasing new 10 wheel trucks along with other vehicles and plows to improve the efficiency of maintaining the town road infrastructure, the next logical goal would be to plan to build a new public works garage that can accommodate the storage of these vehicles and the ongoing maintenance needs of the Department.

Library

The Lisbon Library is located in the village area on School Street in front of the Town Hall. The building was constructed in 1926 and has been used continuously as a library ever since. The library serves Lyman and Landaff as well as Lisbon. The staff consists of one full-time and one part-time librarian. In 2019 the Library had 11,535 holdings and a circulation of 5,413. Wifi is also provided for access to internet-based resources.

The building is in need of handicapped access and other ADA improvements. Work is ongoing to raise funds to carry out this work. Funds are maintained in a capital reserve fund. The library recently secured a grant and hired an architect and have been meeting with him to come up with a phased plan to



accomplish this goal. Depending on the plans, an expansion may be needed. More space is also currently needed for holdings and activities.

Education

The Lisbon Regional School District is made up of the towns of Lisbon and Lyman and receives tuition students from the towns of Landaff and Bath. Originally established in 1891, Lisbon Regional, a small K-12 school, opened its doors to a new middle and high school addition in 1993. Approximately seventy-five staff members serve the needs of 322 students, substantially fewer than the 410 students reported in the 2005 Master Plan. This is consistent with the demographic trends discussed in Chapter 2. As shown in Table 6.1 on the following page, enrollment has been fairly steady over the past ten years although variable from year to year.

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

TABLE 6.1
LISBON REGIONAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT - 2010-2019

(Reported for October 1 of each year)

Grade	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Pre-School	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	17	16	22	29	27	24	19	31	32	22
1	29	21	13	22	16	23	23	17	28	30
2	20	27	22	13	22	16	19	25	18	27
3	19	22	30	19	13	19	20	19	27	21
4	28	26	29	34	23	19	25	22	21	30
5	29	31	28	27	36	20	21	32	25	23
6	27	28	29	27	27	38	21	22	33	27
7	37	35	34	33	31	33	50	23	27	32
8	38	38	33	31	34	25	30	43	23	28
9	28	40	36	32	31	30	28	31	42	24
10	30	32	33	37	29	26	31	22	27	33
11	35	34	26	27	31	28	19	28	23	23
12	24	33	34	24	25	30	30	22	25	22
TOTAL	362	383	369	346	345	331	336	337	351	342

Source: NH Department of Education, Division of Education Analytics and Resources, Bureau of Educational Statistics



The Lisbon Regional School building is approximately 45,000 square feet and sits on 3.73 acres. The original building was built in 1959 and the majority was rebuilt and added on in 1993. Improvements since that time have included energy upgrades such as LED lighting, insulation and a more efficient heating system that uses both oil and propane. The roofs and hot water system have also been replaced. Improvements needed in the future include replacement of the sixty-one year-old windows and replacement and/or rebuilding of the pumps and motors for the heating and cooling systems which are beginning to show their age and leak.

There are plans for a new building on the Annex location across from the school. This Ammonoosuc Valley Academy building will house a special education center and a preschool. The special education center has the potential to bring in additional tuition money for the school while reducing the number of students being send out of the district. The school may be eligible for 57% of the cost to be covered by the state building aid. The Town maintains capital reserve funds for this and other school needs.

Cemeteries

The Town of Lisbon has two cemeteries, Grove Hill Cemetery and Salmon Hole Cemetery. Grove Hill Cemetery is situated on 16 acres of land and was established in 1867. Records of plots and interments are located at the Town Hall in vital records. The grounds are maintained by an insured private



contractor, i.e., mowing, raking, general clean-up. Landscaping and interments are conducted and scheduled by the Department of Public Works under the direction of the sexton.

Planned changes to this cemetery would be future expansion on the eastern slope of the upper section of the cemetery if test holes show suitability for internment. This additional space is estimated to be needed in six to ten more years. Future plans would also include resurfacing roadways with pavement for erosion control within its boundaries. Including in these plans would be to digitize the cemetery lot maps to record every burial lot within its boundaries and enable access to this information through the town website.

Salmon Hole Cemetery, situated on 1.5 acres on the northern end of the village, was established in the late 1780s. This was the original cemetery for the town. This cemetery is no longer active, but bears historical significance for not only this town, but for the nation. Within the boundaries of this cemetery are interred Civil War soldiers as well as Revolutionary War soldiers, most notably Major Benjamin Whitcomb, a Ranger leader in the American Revolution who is considered America's first sniper for single-handedly shooting and killing a British general.

Future plans are a full restoration of the grounds and the markers within the boundaries and to try to compile and digitize records of this cemetery.

Health Care and Housing

Health Care

Lisbon residents and visitors have access to healthcare partners providing a full range of services in nearby communities. Both Littleton Regional Healthcare in Littleton and Cottage Hospital in Woodsville are Critical Access Hospitals providing emergency and primary care services. Area residents in need of specialized services have Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon an hour and quarter away.

In addition to hospital facilities, there are numerous medical services nearby, including:

- Walk-in clinics are available seven days a week at Littleton Regional Healthcare and Convenient MD on Meadow Street in Littleton.
- Ammonoosuc Community Health Services in Littleton and Woodsville is a full service primary care organization with sliding scale, also offering behavioral health and dental care.

- Littleton Veteran Administration Clinic provides primary care and laboratory services for veterans.
- Mental health services in the area include the Center for New Beginnings, and White Mountain Mental Health, Northern Human Services.
- Skilled rehabilitation services on an in-patient basis are available at Littleton Regional Healthcare, Cottage Hospital, Grafton County Nursing Home, Genesis Franconia, and the Morrison Home. Outpatient rehabilitation services are available at Littleton Regional Healthcare, Cottage Hospital's Rowe Health Center, the Alpine Clinic and The Morrison.
- Long term care options include Genesis Franconia, Grafton County Nursing Home in Haverhill, Riverglen House Assisted Living, North Country Manor, On the Green, and Summit by Morrison.
- Home health and hospice services include North County Home Health & Hospice and Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire.

Housing

For those unable to afford market rents, AHEAD (Affordable Housing, Education and Development) manages two properties in Lisbon, the Lisbon Inn and Lisbon Family Housing. The Lisbon Inn, a centerpiece of Lisbon's Main Street, is a former hotel building as shown in the foreground in the c. 1910 postcard and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The building now has nineteen independent-living apartments for those over age 62 or persons with a disability. Two of the units meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements. Lisbon Family Housing is comprised of 10 units in 4 buildings. One unit is ADA compliant.



Area assisted living homes for those needing assistance with daily living activities include Riverglen House and North Country Manor in Littleton, On the Green in Haverhill, and Summit and Morrison in Whitefield. For those needing a higher level of care, whether long term or short term for rehabilitation, area nursing homes include Genesis Franconia, Grafton County Nursing Home in Haverhill, and the Morrison in Whitefield.

Utilities

Solid Waste Disposal

The Town of Lisbon operates a transfer station/recycling facility on Ecology Drive that services the towns of Lisbon, Lyman and Landaff. The Transfer station currently employs one full-time and one part-time person. A large building provides shelter for equipment and recyclables. There is also a smaller building for the scale house and some special wastes. These buildings are expected to serve the town's needs for the foreseeable future, although there is no restroom for the employees.



Solid waste is a pay-by-the-bag program. Special bags must be purchased and used to dispose of waste at the transfer station. The transfer station also accepts construction debris, furniture, tires, refrigerators, electronics and other bulky items for a fee. A separate fee schedule is available for these items. Separate vendors are contracted to take away much of the bulky waste items. The transfer station handles about 650 tons of mixed solid waste (MSW) per year in addition to recyclables and special wastes.

Solid waste not recycled at the transfer station is currently transported to Casella's NCES landfill in Bethlehem. Casella received a permit modification from NHDES in October 2020 which enables an expansion of the landfill to a level the company feels will provide six more years of capacity. Casella is also in the process of applying for permits to develop a landfill in Dalton. The nearest alternatives for Lisbon and the other member communities of the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District would currently be Rochester, which would greatly increase the hauling distance, or Berlin, which would require changing contractors. This means that the cost to the town is likely to increase once the NCES landfill reaches the end of its permitted life if a new landfill is not developed nearby.

Equipment used at the facility currently includes a Bobcat, several bailers, a trash compactor, glass crusher and vehicle scale. The Town maintains a capital reserve fund for the transfer station and for Public Works equipment used at the transfer station.

Municipal Water and Sewer

Both municipal water and sewer serve approximately 380 connections throughout the village area, including New England Wire and eight homes in Landaff. In 2016 the town invested in GPS data collection for the water, sewer and drainage features and any known connectivity and have linked them to the town's GIS.

The wastewater treatment plant is an aerated lagoon system with the effluent discharged to the Ammonoosuc River after disinfection. The plant has a design flow of 320,000 gallons per day and an average flow of 130,000 gallons per day (NHDES 2015). These figures are an indication that there is more than adequate excess capacity for additional development in the village area. The treatment plant was originally built in 1978 and was upgraded in 1992. No additional upgrades or expansions are anticipated at this time. The facility has two aerating lagoons. The main building on site holds the monitoring and testing equipment. There is a smaller building on site with the blowers for the lagoons. The treatment plant is currently operated by one full-time employee.

The pumping station on the Bath Road is currently in need of upgrading with new pumps and control panel. Work is being done as funding permits over the next couple years.

Water is provided by two gravel packed wells located off Bishop Road along the Ammonoosuc River. One well yields approximately 350 gallons per minute and the other 175 gallons per minute. Water is pumped from the wells to two storage tanks totaling 850,000 gallons and gravity feeds to the users from the tanks. The larger of the two wells gets contaminated with high water levels of the Ammonoosuc River and so needs to be monitored more closely. There have been two places identified as possibilities for a new well location that would not be in the floodplain. A \$100,000 grant is available to the town for drilling test wells to identify a new well location. Treatment is provided at the Reed building.

The Town maintains capital reserve funds for both the water system and wastewater treatment facility.

In the past, plans were considered for bringing in water and sewer from Littleton if the Industrial Zone were to be developed.

Telecommunications, internet, cable

Consolidated Communication provides landline telephone service to Lisbon and DSL internet where equipment and lines are available. Spectrum provides cable television and internet to the village area and US 302/NH 10 corridor.

Verizon, AT& T and T-Mobile all show most of Lisbon as part of their service area maps. However, cell phone service is very spotty in town, including along the US 302/NH 10 corridor. This is a safety concern regarding accidents and other emergencies. EMTs are increasingly reliant on cell phones for communications, such as with emergency department personnel while en route to the hospital with a patient. Two additional cell towers received approval from the Planning Board but no carriers have contracted to use them for their antennas yet.

The lack of broadband in much of Lisbon has highlighted the challenges of distance learning in this rural area, an issue of high importance during the COVID19 pandemic. Good broadband is essential now for education and business and is increasingly a factor in real estate sales. Good broadband throughout town has become a key requisite for future growth and development of any community. Grafton County Commissioners have recently formed a committee with the goal of bringing large-scale broadband access to communities.

Electricity

Two utility companies serve the town of Lisbon, Eversource with 736 customers and NH Electric Cooperative with 280 customers. Three-phase power, important for many industries, is available along the US 302 corridor from the town line with Landaff almost to the intersection with NH 117. In the village area three-phase power is available on Central Street to Atwood Ave and along Atwood; on School Street to the powerline and up Kelsea Ave to the school; a portion of Bishop Road; and along another connect from US 302 to the powerline in the area of Peterson Hill Road.

Recreation

Lisbon's location between the Connecticut River and the White Mountain National Forest provides residents and visitors with easy access to a broad range of outdoor recreation activities.



Successful public-private partnerships enable the town of Lisbon to offer families a number of organized recreation activities. The main recreation area with the town pool and bath house and soccer and baseball fields in the heart of Lisbon is owned and maintained by the Lisbon Lions Club. The Lisbon Lions Club provides sporting programs to children in grades K-6 that consists of soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, skiing lessons and swimming. The school contributes to the maintenance and uses the fields for school athletics programs and the Town pays for a life guard for the pool. The Lions Club is currently building a new cook shack for the baseball, softball and soccer fields. An additional soccer field is provided for the school on property of New England Wire.

The town also has a section of 14 miles of rail trail that runs through it. This rail trail is managed by the NH Bureau of Trails but is maintained by the Lisbon Stump Jumpers snowmobile club. The Stump Jumpers also maintain almost another 80 miles of trail throughout the town. These trails provide year-round activities including snowmobiling, biking, atv riding, snowshoeing, horseback riding and more. Private companies provide guided ATV and snowmobile tours year-round.

There is a general consensus that with the popularity of the rail trail, it will need to be widened down the road and the existing gates will need to be removed or widened as the ATVs continue to grow in size. There is also an idea for a “grand kiosk” for all 90+/- miles of trails in town. An idea to build it near and model it after the Railroad Station has been brought up. This may not only provide guidance to

visitors but also give them ideas and directions on local commerce as well as info about the area. As the trails and local water attractions are getting more popular a need for more available parking is also on the rise.

For bicyclists, the 83-mile Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail passes through Lisbon on its way from Woodsville to Bethel, Maine. There are two routes offered through Lisbon - one using backroads to avoid the rockier section of the rail trail.

Lisbon also offers several water bodies that provide a place to fish, boat and swim. Both Perch Pond and Pearl Lake have public accesses. Although there is not yet a formal public access to the Ammonoosuc River in Lisbon, the River is accessible from adjacent roadways in several locations in town.