

# CHAPTER V: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## 1 INTRODUCTION

## 2 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

In October 2008, the Claremont School Long Range Facilities Task Force developed a final report that was passed by the School Reinvestment Committee and presented to the School Board. The Committee performed an extensive evaluation of the size and condition of the existing school buildings and developed recommendations accordingly. Much of the information in this section has been compiled from the Report of the Long Range Facilities Task Force to the Claremont School District, dated October 14, 2008.

The Claremont School District consists of three (3) elementary schools: Bluff Elementary School, Disnard Elementary School, and Maple Avenue Elementary School; one (1) middle school – Claremont Middle School, one (1) high school – Stevens High School, and one half of a regional career and technical center (the other located in the Newport NH School District), the Sugar River Career and Technical Center, and the SAU #6 Administrative Offices located in an adjacent structure to the high school, known as the Dow Building.

The middle school, high school, career and technical center, and the Dow Building are all located in the geographic center of town. The neighborhood elementary schools are located in the west, south west and northern sections of Claremont.

### 2.1 Claremont School District Facilities

#### 2.1.1 Sugar River Career & Technical Center

The Sugar River Career & Technical Center was constructed in 1992 and shows no renovation needs at this time.

#### 2.1.2 Stevens High School

Stevens High School was originally constructed in 1879 and has had several additions and renovations over the past 129 years. The 145,000 square foot building serves a diverse population of currently fewer than 700 students in grades 9-12. For many citizens, the historic features of the building hold compelling and immeasurable emotional and intrinsic value. Putting aside the emotional connection most have with the building, the issues affecting this structure's functionality – access, safety and supportive curriculum environment – are lacking on many levels, including but not limited to: limited parking for faculty, staff and students; outdated and inadequate science labs; inadequate and outdated technology access; limited workspace for teachers, guidance, and administrative staff; outdated and inadequate locker rooms. The school's playing fields are located across Broad Street at Monadnock Park, about 300 yards from the school building.

#### 2.1.3 Claremont Middle School

Claremont Middle School, built in 1956 and remodeled in 1995-1996, utilizes a team model in its design and curriculum delivery. Issues in the building include inadequate science labs, locker rooms; environmental issues such as not being energy efficient, inefficient lighting and a shortage of electrical and technology outlets. Locker rooms are not ADA compliant and are prone to mold despite efforts to keep them clean. Office space for faculty, staff and administration is also limited and changes with day-to-day operations. The roof underwent repairs and sprinklers were added in 2010.

### **2.1.4 Elementary Schools**

Bluff Elementary School was constructed in 1939 with an addition added in 1996, bringing its square footage to slightly over 32,500. Disnard Elementary School was constructed in 1958 as St. Mary's High School and transitioned to an elementary school in 1971. Among the needs identified at Disnard, there is no room for all-day kindergarten, insufficient lighting and electrical systems; limited storage space and administrative offices and common rooms are small or non-existent. Maple Avenue Elementary was constructed in 1952 with two major additions in 1968 and 1996. Room size, closets and general storage space is extremely limited, and parking issues also exist. All three schools were sprinkled in 2007-2008.

### **2.1.5 SAU #6 Administrative Offices**

The Dow Building is home to the SAU Administrative Offices. It is also a historical building within Claremont's Historic District. There are inefficient and inadequate spaces, a lack of energy efficiency despite the replacement of the windows in 2005, and lighting and technological access challenges.

## ***2.2 Independent Secondary and Post-Secondary Education Facilities***

The University System of New Hampshire provides secondary education at two locations in Claremont. River Valley Community College on Hanover Street in Claremont currently has the full-time equivalent of 893 students shared between the Claremont and Keene facilities. There are additionally a number of non-credit students and workforce training programs. The largest concentration of students is in the Allied Health programs, particularly nursing. The Claremont campus has recently expanded programming in business management and information technology.

Granite State College on Pleasant Street in Claremont offers Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Bachelor of Arts, and Bachelor of Science degrees in a variety of disciplines. GSC also offers a Post Baccalaureate Teacher Certification program. It is a future site for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), which provides adults age 50 or over an opportunity to add to a lifetime of learning.

## **3 MUNICIPAL FACILITIES**

### ***3.1 Municipal Buildings and Departments***

#### **3.1.1 City Hall**

The City Hall/Opera House was built in 1896 on Opera House Square. The building has undergone extensive renovation since the 1974 Master Plan. The upper floor has been restored as a functioning opera house with many of the original fittings. The lower floor houses the offices of the City Manager, City Solicitor, Finance Clerk & Bookkeeper, City Treasurer & Finance Director, Assessing, Human Resources, Information Technology, as well as the City Council Chamber. All but two offices, Finance and Treasurer's, are handicapped accessible. There are inadequate numbers of rest rooms and meeting rooms in the building.

There are three parking spaces behind the building for maintenance personnel and the City Manager. Other City Hall staff park alongside the fire station or across the street in the Public Parking area. The proximity of the Hall to the central business district's public parking areas negates the need for a "city hall parking area".

Table 5-1

City Hall Usage	
Department	Staff
Maintenance	3
Central Collections	4
Treasurer's Office	2
Finance	2
City Manager's Office	2
City Solicitor	1
Assessing	2
Human Resources	1
City Welfare	2

### 3.1.2 Police Department

Since 1880, the men and women of the Claremont Police Department have served the residents of Claremont. In March 1888, the Claremont Police Department employed four police officers, paying them a total of \$198 for the fiscal year. Today the Claremont Police Department employees 23 full-time sworn officers, 1 full-time federally grant funded officer and 5 full-time civilian support personnel. The Police Department is a full service Law Enforcement agency with an operating budget of \$2,320,889 for calendar year 2011. The Emergency Communications division is a full service Emergency Communications Center for police, fire and EMS in the City of Claremont with an operating budget of \$413,902 for calendar year 2011.

The first Chief of Police was appointed in 1900, when George W. Boyd headed up a one man department with the title of "Superintendent." The first police cruiser, a panel truck nicknamed Napoleon, was purchased in 1934. It took another ten years to get the second cruiser. Today, the Claremont Police Department has six (6) line cruisers or marked cruisers commonly referred to as "Black and Whites," three (3) unmarked cars, one (1) pick-up truck purchased with grant money and one (1) All Terrain Vehicle (ATV). The cruiser fleet is rotated on a regular basis through a lease purchase program with the six (6) line cars scheduled for replacement every three years and generally the three unmarked cars are replaced every six plus years. The lease purchase program has been working very well and provides for consistent cost effective operable cruiser fleet with reasonable maintenance costs.

In 1920, 111 cases were handled which included, among others, 12 instances of keeping liquor on sale, eight cases of making home brew, and 44 cases of drunkenness. Today things have changed radically. In 2010 the Claremont Police Department and Emergency Communications Center handled 26,737 Calls for Service. Officers made 818 arrests, took 1574 offense reports and responded to 543 reportable motor vehicle accidents. Responding to this volume of calls, offenses and accidents puts a strain on a sworn staff that has been reduce from an average of 26 sworn full-time officers to a low of 22 sworn in 2009 and our current sworn strength of 24, including our grant funded position. Staffing levels limit our ability to be proactive and limit our ability to provide continual on the job training. With the advent of E-911 and Cell Phones, the Emergency Communications Center in busier than ever. Despite the increase in activity, there has not been a corresponding increase in personnel.

In their quest for continued professional growth, the Claremont Police Department is voluntarily going through the process of becoming an Accredited Law Enforcement agency through the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). This is has been a multi-year stepped process with our first goal being achieved in November of 2009 when we became a Recognized agency through CALEA. We hope to be accredited by November, 2012.

The accreditation process has forced us to take a close look at our facilities. The police building is attached to the northeast corner of City Hall. Access is from Broad Street and from Opera House Square. Court facilities are currently housed in the same building but based on State budgetary issues this court facility could potentially face closure. The current space is not adequate and is fully utilized. The Communications Center is severely limited in space with administrative offices being crammed into equipment rooms. The facilities are also in need of general upgrades and replacement especially the locker rooms, shower rooms, wash room, bathrooms, and the booking and processing area. Additionally, parking is limited and the garage bays are in need of upgrades.

While Homeland Security grant money has helped establish a strong digital radio communications system for the department, we have not been able to keep pace with our in car computer systems. We have been fortunate to receive in car computer hardware through the University of New Hampshire's Car 54 project for our six line cruisers in December 2010. However we currently do not have the funds to make these systems fully integrated into our in-house records and information management system to help alleviate the overwhelming burden in the Communications Center.

Despite the limitations outlined above, the Claremont Police Department continues to successfully meet the challenges it faces. Community interaction is an important function of the Claremont Police Department mission. Community Policing is the cornerstone of the department's policing philosophy with a strong emphasis on encouraging its officers and the community to work together to solve problems. According to Chief Alexander Scott, "Working together, we can all make a difference and continue to keep Claremont a safe and comfortable city."

### **3.1.3 Fire Department**

The Fire Department is located at 100 Broad Street. The fire station was designed by a local architect and constructed in 1917. The street level consists of four apparatus bays, a communications room and shift commander and fire code enforcement offices. This levels' concrete floor was replaced in the late 70's due to the increased weight of fire apparatus. The basement level houses additional equipment such as a rescue boat and trailer and a fire hose drying rack. Additional utility equipment is located on the basement level. The upper floor contains offices for the Fire Chief, an assembly hall and living quarters. A fire sprinkler system was recently installed to protect this vital public safety facility. The garage at the rear of the station houses support vehicles and equipment, however there currently remains a shortage of undercover parking for support vehicles and equipment.

The Deputy Fire Chief is a shift commander and the department training officer. The department is made up of two divisions, twenty full time or career personnel and fourteen paid call personnel. Fulltime personnel are nationally certified at a minimum level of firefighter II and as emergency medical technicians. The fire department is also licensed as a non-transport ambulance service. The Fire Department responds to approximately one-thousand emergency calls annually.

Both previous Master Plans proposed that an additional fire substation be constructed, however, over ninety percent of emergencies calls are answered within four minutes from the fire station's present location. Insurance rates are based on the length of time that it takes fire apparatus to reach a fire scene, the fire department's apparatus and equipment inventory, the number of personnel on duty, the municipal water system and how close a building is to the nearest fire hydrant. Improving and adding to these resources along with additional storage of fire department utility vehicles should be explored.

### **3.1.4 Public Works**

The Department of Public Works currently has an office and a main garage facility on Grandview Street. The public works component of Claremont was recently reorganized to combine the responsibility for water and sewer with management of highways, equipment maintenance, solid waste, and cemeteries.

This reorganization of the public works functions did not include provision of a central facility. To improve communications and efficiency, the City constructed a new office facility at the site of the City's highway garage on Grandview Street.

### **3.1.5 Visitors Center – Planning & Development**

In 2001 Claremont opened a new 2000 square foot Visitors Center on the Sugar River at 14 North Street. The new construction was funded with a grant from the Federal Highway Administration/NH Department of Transportation for scenic byways. The Claremont Visitors Center is part of the Connecticut River Scenic Byways program and provides regional information for guests on the main floor.

The lower level of the building serves as the offices for the Department of Planning and Development, which includes economic development, planning, zoning, building and health code services for the City. Future needs include upgrades to handicapped parking, improved exterior lighting and on-going general maintenance.

A new pedestrian bridge and riverfront public common were constructed and opened in 2006 that connects the historic city center and mill district with the Visitors Center and neighborhoods of North Claremont.

### **3.1.6 Sawtooth Parking Garage**

As a component of the Monadnock Mill Revitalization project in 2009, the City redeveloped the former Sullivan Machine Forge building to create a parking garage to service the area. The new multi-deck garage built into the south side of the historic sawtooth building has 63 public parking spaces available for all day parking on a “first come” basis. Additional surface parking was also created adjacent to the Visitors Center on North Street.

### **3.1.7 Fiske Free Library**

The Fiske Free Library has provided educational, cultural, and recreational resources to the citizens of Claremont for over 130 years. Today the library plays a vital role in the life of the community, providing materials and services that help children learn to read, help students excel, and help adults improve their lives.

The library building, one of nine Carnegie funded library buildings in New Hampshire, was built in 1903, expanded in the 1920s, and updated in the 1960s. While attractive, centrally located, and structurally sound, the library building poses a number of problems for library services. The 1991 Claremont Master Plan noted that “the library is rapidly approaching 100% capacity.” Since that time the library has continued to expand its holdings. Stack areas are crowded and difficult to browse, there is inadequate public seating, and staff work/office space is severely limited. The library’s space challenges are further complicated by an increased demand for public computers and technology and by the loss of the use of the Claremont Conference Center for library programs. Growth in Claremont’s population will increase the demand for library services and will place additional stress on an already overcrowded library.

### **3.1.8 Human Services**

The Welfare Department, housed in City Hall, provides assistance on an emergency basis. For the able bodied unemployed, benefits are generally provided in exchange for community service. Court-mandated community service is also administered through the Welfare Department.

The Claremont Housing Authority (CHA), a private non-profit organization, is housed at the Marion Phillips Apartments on Broad Street. CHA manages several assisted housing complexes in Claremont. The Authority is also responsible for managing the Section 8 certificate/voucher program which allows low income, elderly, and handicapped citizens to rent private housing at market rates.

## **3.2 Municipal Utilities**

### **3.2.1 Water Supply – Existing Sources**

Claremont's primary public water source is the Whitewater Brook watershed. Whitewater Reservoir, on the Claremont-Cornish line, is fed by a 4.3 square mile watershed in Cornish and Croydon. The reservoir has a storage capacity of 169 million gallons and an estimated safe yield of about one million gallons per day. The City of Claremont owns 234 acres of land around Whitewater.

The system is also made up of Rice Reservoir with a 37 million gallon storage capacity, and Dole Reservoir which is estimated to hold 37 million gallons. Water is fed from the Whitewater and Rice Reservoirs through a 10" line into Dole where it enters the treatment plant. The City owns 50 acres around Rice and 23 around Dole.

A pump and main along Winter Street were installed in 1981 to draw water from the Sugar River into either the treatment plant or the Dole Reservoir. This was intended as a back-up supply for use when the Dole Reservoir is low and is currently being used about once every other month.

Other sources presently not in use include the Fitch and McQuade Reservoirs and the Clark well. The Fitch and McQuade Reservoirs were taken off line and breached. The City does own a large protective buffer of 298 acres around these reservoirs.

The Clark well on Puckershire Brook was installed in 1972 and has a capacity of between 900,000 and 1,200,000 gallons per day. Use of the well was discontinued in 1981 due to high levels of manganese.

### **3.2.2 Water Supply – Treatment**

The Claremont Water Treatment Plant was constructed to treat high turbidity and bacteria. The Plant opened in 1981 with a capacity of 4 million gallons per day. The treatment plant is located adjacent to the Dole Reservoir. The plant is currently operating at approximately 33% of capacity, or 1.8 million gallons per day.

### **3.2.3 Water Supply – Storage**

A 3 million gallon storage tank is located at Moody Hill.

A half million gallon storage tank is located on Bible Hill. This water circulates constantly as it is used to gravity feed residences in the area. This water tank is fed via a new booster pump station located along Charlestown Road.

### **3.2.4 Water Supply – Distribution**

Claremont's public water supply system extends much further than the downtown area. Public water is available southwest to Grissom Lane, east onto Washington Street, and north on Hanover Street. Most of the City is gravity fed and consequently, pressure is variable.

Almost all of the water supply system is monitored at the treatment plant on meters. Abnormalities indicating potential problems with the lines are responded to immediately.

As is true with any aging water system, pipe sizes and conditions are a concern. As mentioned above, the pipes which feed water from the Whitewater Brook system into Dole Reservoir are ten inches in diameter. Whitman and Howard reported in their 1973 water facilities study that, within one year after cleaning, these pipes have a capacity lower than the safe yield of the reservoir. This means that the City may not be utilizing some of the available water in the system, and so may be pumping from the Sugar River more

than necessary. The age of pipes can also be a problem. Some of the existing pipework in Claremont is one hundred years old. Since old pipes are unlined, sediments accumulate and reduce flows.

### **3.2.5 Water Supply – Future Needs**

Whitewater, Rice and Dole Reservoirs, and the Sugar River, are considered to have adequate capacity to supply Claremont's water needs for the foreseeable future.

### **3.2.6 Wastewater Treatment – Plant**

The wastewater treatment plant is located on the Sugar River off Plains Road. It has a capacity of 3.9 million gallons per day. The plant was designed with expansion capability of 1 million additional gallons per day. The plant is currently operating at 40% capacity for liquids and 90% for solids. This means that although the plant could handle twice as much volume as it currently receives, the concentration of solids in the waste currently entering the plant would first have to be reduced.

Because of the high level of solids received from some of the plant's industrial users, industrial pretreatment is a key factor in the successful operation of this plant. 1989 was the first year of full implementation of the pretreatment program with a coordinator and full time enforcement. It is hoped that this program will lead to increased cooperation by industries.

Septage, the material pumped from on-site septic systems is another contributor to the high solids level at the plant. Septage is accepted not just from Claremont, but from surrounding communities as well.

### **3.2.7 Wastewater Treatment – Collection**

Collection. The area served by the wastewater treatment plant is shown on Figure [ ]. As shown, public wastewater treatment is primarily provided to the downtown area and Washington Street. The system serves approximately 195 industrial and commercial users and 2,715 residences.

### **3.2.8 Wastewater Treatment – Future Needs**

Municipal sewer was extended to River Road and the Gully Brook pump station in the late 1980's. No further extensions are under consideration at this time, as capacity is not yet at 50%.

## **4 PRIVATE UTILITIES**

### **4.1 Electric Service**

Electric service is provided to Claremont primarily by Public Service of New Hampshire (PSNH).

Three phase power, needed by many types of industry, is available in much of Claremont including Rte. 103 from West Claremont through Washington Street; Rte. 120 north past Thrasher Road to River Valley Community College; Charlestown Road through the current business zone; and down River Rd. (Route 12-A) into Charlestown.

### **4.2 Communications**

There are currently a number of internet service providers, including Comcast and Fairpoint. High-speed internet access is becoming an increasingly important component to a community's communications infrastructure. A statewide inventory and planning program is currently underway to evaluate the extent and quality of broadband internet service. Among the many goals of the New Hampshire Broadband Mapping Program will be the development of broadband availability maps to guide future broadband investments.

Claremont Community TV broadcasts meetings and events of local interest.

See the Economic Development Chapter and Housing Chapter Goals for more information.

## **5 GOALS RELATED TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

To be completed from the CIP. . .

DRAFT