

## 7. Community Facilities and Services

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## Introduction

A town is in many ways characterized by its public facilities and the way in which it provides services. In a relatively small town such as Hingham, many of its public buildings — Town Hall, the Library, the recreational facilities, the Senior Center, and the schools — also serve as gathering places where residents meet one another. The condition of a municipality's public facilities sends a message to newcomers and reflects the level of care the townspeople extend to their public buildings. The types of public services a municipality provides and the locations in which it provides these also shed light on a community's priorities (e.g. families with children, taking care of elderly, etc.), and where it would like development to occur (e.g. by providing water and sewer services).

Shifts in demographics may indicate the need to shift resources within a community. As an example, the number of older adults in Hingham continues to increase and many of them express a desire to "age in place." This shift may lead to an increased need for certain Town services, as noted in a 2013 Needs Assessment conducted for the Department of Elder Services.<sup>1</sup> (See side textbox.)

Maintaining acceptable levels of municipal services at a reasonable cost is an important planning and fiscal objective. Facilities planning and management can help meet this objective and also requires collaboration among staff. Hingham Town Staff report good cooperation between departments and appreciate the high level of volunteerism on the part of the Town's residents.

Capital planning decisions should be made systematically and the process should be transparent. In Hingham, long-term capital projects come out of separate committees and some Town Staff report feeling a lack of clarity regarding the

### Impacts of an Increasing Population of Older Adults on Town Departments<sup>1</sup>

- **Council on Aging/Elder Services:** As the population continues to age, there will be an increased demand for services including programming, transportation, socialization, etc.
- **Police Department:** The Police Department has experienced an increase in service calls associated with the aging population. Some of this is linked to large new housing developments in the community, but much of the increase occurs broadly throughout the community. Examples of issues on the upswing include scams targeting seniors, driving concerns involving seniors, and issues resulting from the isolation of some seniors, especially those living alone without children in the area.
- **Fire Department:** EMS calls have increased considerably. Some increase in calls relating to older people falling is also noted.
- **Town Nurse:** There is an increased demand for public health nursing, services geared toward seniors (e.g., specialized flu clinics, programs offered in collaboration with the Senior Center). Additional issues observed are mental health issues and limitations among some seniors that threaten their ability to stay home safely.

<sup>1</sup> UMass Boston, Center for Social and Demographic Research in Aging Gerontology Institute. *Aging in Hingham. A Community Affair*. February 2013, p. 51.

decision-making process. They ask: “What are the criteria for prioritizing projects? Shouldn’t the community vet the decisions?” This suggests that the process needs to be further formalized.

## Existing Conditions and Trends

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### TOWN HALL

The Town Hall, a former middle school that was converted into a Municipal Complex in 1998, houses Town offices and public meeting spaces, as well as the Police Department, School Department, the Council on Aging, and the Department of Recreation. Approximately 20 acres owned by the Town are



*Hingham Town Hall*

located behind the building. Many of the departments located here have expanded since originally moving in 1998, and now report crowding, a lack of appropriate space, and inadequate room for storage.

It will be important to identify ways to reallocate space at the Municipal Complex to provide adequate amounts and types of spaces, and to address each of the Departments’ needs. Candidates for relocation include the School Department, the Police Department, and the regional emergency dispatch and/or the Senior Center.

### Technology

The Town’s Data Center is located in Town Hall and connects sixteen municipal buildings with fiber, and handles all the municipal computers as well as the phone systems in the schools. The Data Center space is reportedly inadequate in terms of its size, but also lacks a back up system and fire suppression. The Director would like to be able to share data with the other two town data centers, located at the High School and in the main Fire Station. Currently the Data Center is operated by three FTEs (full-time equivalents); there are plans for a fourth FTE GIS coordinator position. According to the Director, the ideal location for the Data Center is the Town Hall.

There is a plan to computerize all Town records, and to monitor town equipment remotely. In the future there will be a need to expand the Town’s data storage capacity in order to archive the increasing numbers of videos. Cameras have been installed on the Transfer Station, DPW, the Library, and the Harbor, and additional cameras are planned for the athletic fields and the exterior of Town Hall.

Additionally, the Town is in the process of replacing the fiber in the sixteen municipal buildings (initially installed by Comcast in 1999) and to expand to the athletic fields, sewer pump stations, and the business areas to provide Wi-Fi access and camera surveillance in these areas.

## SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

The **School Department offices** are located at the Municipal Complex. The space is reportedly inadequate for the Department's functions — privacy is limited, and there is a need for a variety of spaces, including offices, space for School Committee meetings, and additional room for storage.

The schools are mostly older facilities that are just below or at capacity and can, for the most part, accommodate the relatively small increases in projected enrollments. Most pressing is the need to address flooding at the Foster School. According to a Climate Change Vulnerability Report,<sup>2</sup> the school will experience increased flooding, which by 2030 will make the school unable to function. Plans are underway to rebuild the school out of the flood zone area. The other schools are able to accommodate the number of students anticipated, but do not have the spaces to support special needs, psychological counseling, socio-psychological issues, training for professionals, maker spaces, etc. and will eventually need renovation/addition(s).

The School Department maintains all of its buildings and playgrounds while the grass is cut at the school properties by the Department of Public Works.

The Hingham School district is comprised of 7 schools; these are listed in Table 7.1 on the next page.



*Hingham School Department Offices*



*The Foster School has been identified as one of the municipal buildings most vulnerable to flooding from sea level rise. Plans are underway to rebuild it away from the flood zone area.*

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<sup>2</sup> Kleinfeler, *Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study*, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015.

<b>Table 7.1. Hingham School Buildings</b>					
<b>School</b>	<b>Approx. Size (square feet)</b>	<b>Year Constructed (renovations, additions)</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Hingham High School	218,000	(Addition and complete renovation 2000)	59.5	9-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In need of upgrades and updates</li> <li>• Science Wing added in 2000; needs new tech, STEAM, etc.</li> <li>• poor lighting and air quality issues</li> <li>• the campus has a number of athletic fields</li> </ul>
Hingham Middle School	176,000	2014	34	6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has capacity for 1020 students</li> </ul>
South Elementary School	78,731	1950 (addition and complete renovation: 1999)	28.3	K-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At enrollment capacity (500 students)</li> </ul>
Foster Elementary School	62,600	1951	39.6	K-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to be rebuilt (currently located in flood zone)</li> <li>• Enrollments are growing at a faster rate in this school due to housing developments at the Shipyard</li> </ul>
Plymouth River Elementary School	59,300	1968 (renovation 2008)	49.5	K-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing enrollment is 423 and capacity is approximately 500 students</li> </ul>
East School	91,350	2009	12.5	K-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also accommodates special education for Pre-school</li> </ul>
Building 179	10,262				
Building 12	18,000				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A TRACES program for industrial arts is run by the High School in this building</li> </ul>
Gate House	4,839				
Bus Garage	23,462				
Sources: Hingham School Department					

**Historic Enrollment**

As evident in Table 7.2, student enrollments experienced an increase as more housing was developed and newcomers were attracted by the school system’s reputation (between the ten years from 2000 to 2010). Enrollments remained fairly steady during the following decade. This may be explained by the fact that much of the new housing developed was multi-family, only bringing in some children and many older adults remaining in their homes long after their children have graduated from high school.

**Table 7.2. Hingham Public School Student Historical Enrollments (2001-2011)**

School Year	Enrollment	Increase (Decrease)
2001	3,457	57
2002	3,554	97
2003	3,596	42
2004	3,678	82
2005	3,763	85
2006	3,796	33
2007	3,850	54
2008	4,023	173
2009	4,110	87
2010	4,154	44
2011	4,135	(19)
2012	4202	67
2013	4237	35
2014	4292	55
2015	4327	35
2016	4317	(10)
2017	4299	(18)
2018	4232	(67)

Source: Hingham School Department

**Table 7.3. Hingham Public School Student Enrollments Projections (2019-2028)**

School Year	Enrollment	Increase (Decrease)
2019	4203	(29)
2020	4221	18
2021	4245	24
2022	4251	6
2023	4229	(22)
2024	4223	(6)
2025	4223	0
2026	4254	31
2027	4237	(17)
2028	4277	40

**Enrollment Projections**

Table 7.3 above indicates that student enrollments are expected to gradually increase, with the greatest growth projected for Grades K-5. This assumes the current pace of residential construction and real estate sales. Housing grew from 2.9% change from 1990 to 2000 to 21.5% in 2010. Based on past patterns, NESDEC predicts that as new families move into Hingham, about

70% of the school-aged students will enroll in in the elementary grades, 20% in the middle school grades and about 10% at the high school level.<sup>3</sup> Some of the new families may have pre-school children and therefore, the full enrollment impact may not occur until the second or third year after they have moved into Town.

There are also 588 Hingham students in grades K-12 currently registered at the seven (7) private and parochial schools located in Town: Derby Academy, Notre Dame Academy, St. Paul School, Old Colony Montessori, and Su Escuela Language Academy. Additionally, there are 15 homeschooled students (2017) and ten in Charter or Magnet schools (2017).

**DEPARTMENT OF ELDER SERVICES/SENIOR CENTER**

Hingham has the highest percentage of people over 65 in the South Shore. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of Hingham residents aged 65 and over increased by 55% compared to 16% statewide. Much of this might be the result of Linden Ponds and other age-restricted developments in Hingham built during that interval, which may have attracted new seniors to the town.

<sup>3</sup> New England School Development Council (NESDEC), Hingham, MA: *Demography and Enrollment Projections*: August 9, 2018, Revision #2.

The Council on Aging is appointed by the Board of Selectmen and serves in an advisory capacity to the Department of Elder Services. Elder Services provides programs, services, activities and transportation for all residents 60 years of age and older and serves as a resource for information to families, friends and neighbors who care for an older person.

According to the 2010 Census<sup>4</sup>, 5,735 Hingham residents are aged 60 and over, representing 26% of the total population of the Town. Another 5,139 residents, aged 45-59 are next in line to move into the next stage in their life cycle within the coming decade.

The main facility providing services to Hingham's older adults is the Senior Center, which was built in 19XX, updated in 1996, and is located in the Town Hall complex. The space is not adequate to serve its current population, and participation in some Senior Center programs is limited because of physical space constraints. Furthermore, it is expected to become even more inadequate as the number of older adult residents continues to increase. MAPC data indicates that this trend will continue, and they anticipate a 66% increase in ages 70-74 from 2010 until 2020 and a 58% increase in ages 80-84 between 2020 and 2030.<sup>5</sup>



*Hingham Senior Center*

The Center, which operates Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:30 AM-4:00 PM, Tuesdays from 8:30 AM-6:30 PM, and Fridays from 8:30 AM-12:30 PM, is approximately 5,000 square feet. Hingham's Senior Center is comprised of two classrooms and one multi-purpose room with capacity for 60 seniors (seated at tables). Additional space is needed for a dedicated art room, a health room, larger capacity classrooms, dedicated fitness room, functioning commercial kitchen, consult office, volunteer work space, meeting rooms, conference room, storage, offices, and an Activities Coordinator. Also, the facility does not meet all ADA compliance recommendations; bathroom facilities are inadequate and not fully accessible for a person with physical limitations. Installing safety alert pull chords would help to notify staff of an individual in need of help. To address scheduling and programming needs, the senior center tries to coordinate programs offsite at the Hingham Public Library and within the town hall meeting rooms.

The Center is staffed with three full-time paid professionals, two part-time grant-funded positions, three part-time drivers, and a large number of volunteers. Services provided include door-to-door transportation, outreach, health and wellness clinics, fitness classes, volunteer opportunities, cultural programs, special events and opportunities for learning and for socializing. The Center provides a congregate lunch twice a week and Meals on Wheels to 40 town residents. The Department of Elder Services partners with community agencies to provide services and programming; organizations include South Shore Elder Services, Inc., Hingham Interfaith Food Pantry, and Visiting Nurse Association.

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<sup>4</sup> As reported in the Town of Hingham, Department Elder Services: *Strategic Plan* July 1, 2015-June 30,2020.

<sup>5</sup> MAPC, Regional Growth Projections, Hingham population, 2014.

**Transportation.** The Department of Elder Services has two vans (which seat eight people each) and a medical car (three part-time drivers) to bring older adults to medical appointments. The vans take individuals to the grocery store, on trips, to the pharmacy, to the Senior Center, to the library, etc. There is no bus from at Lindon Ponds to the Senior Center.

As previously mentioned, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of Hingham’s 60+ population; however, only approximately 14% of residents 60+ living in Town use the Senior Center. Some cite the difficulty parking as an obstacle, while others cite its location. There also seems to be a perception that the Center is oriented towards frail, older, and lower income elders. Middle- and upper-income seniors do not tend to attend events or use the Center in any way. The Center, regardless of its current or future location may need to undergo a re-branding<sup>6</sup> as many aging baby boomers do not identify with the term “senior,” some preferring intergenerational experiences. Additionally, baby boomers express different programming preferences than previous generations of older adults. This may indicate an opportunity to explore creating a “Community Campus” or “Community Center” for all ages. With the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hingham’s Senior Center on March 23, 2020, marking this milestone anniversary may be an opportunity to re-brand.

*“The boomers are changing how we do things. . . . They don’t want to admit that they are aging and they are not going to embrace it in the same way . . . they are looking for different opportunities.”*

-Barbara Farnsworth, former head of the Hingham Department of Elder Services (for 15 years), as quoted in “A Good Age: Making Senior Centers the best they can be” (Wicked Local Hingham, The Patriot Ledger, March 18, 2018)

The Department of Elder Services has a stated goal of achieving “continuous contact with at least 90% of Hingham’s senior population and active participation by at least 50% of Hingham’s senior population in one or more programs or services.”<sup>7</sup>

According to a Needs Assessment conducted in 2013 “most Boomer and Senior residents have lived in Hingham for many years, although Linden Ponds and Allerton House attract some seniors from outside of Hingham, with the result that a sizable share of the oldest-old Seniors (aged 80 or more) being relatively new to the community. Across the board, Seniors and Boomers are highly committed to remaining in Hingham as they grow older. Yet some challenges to successfully aging in place are reported.” Key concerns among respondents to a survey administered as part of the Needs Assessment

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<sup>6</sup> As an example, the “Senior Center” in nearby Plymouth, MA is called the “Center for Active Living.” In Medfield, the Senior Center is called “The Center.”

<sup>7</sup> From Town of Hingham, Department Elder Services: *Strategic Plan* July 1, 2015-June 30,2020.

included the following<sup>8</sup>:

- Transportation
- Lack of parking at the Senior Center
- High cost of living
- Desire to age in place and remain independent
- Desire for more communication regarding services and programs, including on social media
- Desire to socialize
- Fitness and recreational programs were rated the highest

According to the Department of Elders Strategic Plan and In line with current trends, future goals include providing more opportunities for lifelong learning and for fitness and wellness, as well as programs integrating technology. (However, there is no space or parking for expanding programming at this time.) Additionally, in order to reach a broader range of older adults and provide more and different programming, the Department of Elder Services plans to increase collaboration with the Recreation Department, Hingham Public School Department, the Library, and Discovery Program (lifelong learning), a UMass program. Ideally, the Department of Elder Services would like to have at least three classrooms, two fitness rooms, one large art room with a kiln, a dedicated health room, areas that foster social interaction, dedicated spaces for card and game enthusiasts, and an indoor walking track. Storage space is required in every room, so seniors do not have to lug their supplies in and out of the building with them every day. The Department would be interested in pursuing a dementia-friendly designation from AARP and in developing a Memory Café for those with Alzheimer’s disease and their caretakers.

The current location, while not adequate in terms of space, gives older adults and the Department of Elder Services access to the library, the Recreation Department, and Town Hall services. Parking is an obstacle preventing residents from accessing the Center. One suggestion for increasing the availability of parking for seniors is to require all Town employees to park at Hailey Field, a Town-owned parcel within a block of Town Hall. Creating a walkway between this area and Town Hall could help to decrease the perception of distance.

**Research on Precedents.** The Department has recently reached out to area communities and has gathered information and data regarding their Senior Centers, including whether they are in a shared Community Center or have a dedicated building, the types of spaces and programs they offer, etc. to help inform the decision regarding expanding/relocating Hingham’s Senior Center. For the existing location to continue to serve Hingham’s growing senior population, one or more of the current Town Hall departments would have to be relocated. The senior center would need to more than double its size to offer the range of programming to span across forty+ years of interest. According to Hingham’s Director of Elder Services, a free-standing building with opportunities for intergenerational activities on a shared campus would be ideal. Potential alternative sites include the new Foster School building and the bowling alley at the Country Club.

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<sup>8</sup> UMass Boston, Center for Social and Demographic Research in Aging Gerontology Institute. *Aging in Hingham*. A Community Affair. February 2013.

In 2018, “Age-friendly” best practices were added to the Baker-Polito Administration Community Compact Initiative. Age-friendly communities are accessible, equitable, inclusive, safe, and supportive. Age-friendly communities place a focus on creating a social and physical environment that supports all ages and abilities. The Hingham Senior Center and Department of Elder Services shall work towards achieving the designation of the Age Friendly Community status.

**Impacts of Climate Change.** Other future concerns are related to the increasing risks of potential impacts of climate change<sup>9</sup> — the aging population makes up 22% of Hingham’s residents, and several assisted living facilities are located near flood-prone areas. This population is also particularly vulnerable to the effects of heat and drought.

#### LIBRARY

The Library was original built in 1966, and renovated and expanded in 2001, including a connection to the former Town Hall to create a total of approximately 40,000 square feet. The facility is 100% accessible and ADA compliant. The “bridge” connecting the two buildings also functions as an art gallery, with exhibits that change monthly. The library also houses some of the Town’s historical collections. An outdoor courtyard is enjoyed by patrons in the warmer months. The Library building does not adequately support existing functions and is not able to provide the appropriate types and sizes of spaces to accommodate future plans. The Library Director has developed a proposal for a redesign, including an addition to the existing building. She has also developed a Long Term Plan based on an employee survey, a patron survey, and Trustee, employee, and community meetings.

The Library holds more than 343,000 physical and digital items including books, magazines, DVDs, compact discs, eBooks, and other materials. The Library also houses extensive print and electronic reference resources. More than half of Hingham’s residents (12,343) hold library cards, placing it statistically well above national and state averages. The Library has over 100 volunteers who offered over 5,000 hours last year.



*Hingham Public Library*

Approximately 1,000 people on average visit the Library each day.<sup>10</sup> It is reported that frequently all the seats in the Library are taken, especially during after school hours when many students (mostly from the high school which is within walking distance) come to do their homework. There is not enough space for

<sup>9</sup> Beals & Thomas, Summary of Findings: *Community Resilience Building*, June 26, 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Hingham Public Library, *Needs Statement. Proposal for Building Addition.*

tutoring, which is conducted at a local bank instead of at the library because of a lack of space. Additionally, there are not enough quiet spaces and there are no collaboration spaces.

The Library provides opportunities for lifelong learning, but while there is demand for additional programming, there is not enough space to provide it. Residents have also expressed a desire There is for more cultural offerings — such as lectures and performances — that the library would like to provide, but lacks the appropriate space to do so.

Because the former Town Hall was not designed as a library, there are several problems with the space, including poor sight lines that create safety and security concerns, especially in the Children’s Room. This cannot be remedied due to the fact that structural walls cause the obstruction and therefore cannot be removed. Additional issues are with regard to the layout of the building; for example, the service point is a long walk from the main entrance, which creates a “less than ideal situation for elderly patrons of patrons with mobility problems.”<sup>11</sup>

In addition to space inadequacies and constraints that limit the ability of the library to expand programming, parking is reportedly a significant concern. There are currently 99 spaces and they are mostly full. Often seniors and parents with strollers must find parking on the street. According to a survey conducted by the library, some families go to the Cohasset Library because of the updated children’s spaces and ease of parking.

There are two meeting rooms (90 and 22 seats respectively) that are booked much of the time. The rooms are reportedly not large enough, and availability is very limited. There is one computer training room and 17 dedicated Internet workstations.

As is evident in Table 7.4 below, in the year 2018, approximately 1,000 people per day came through the library doors. While circulation numbers have remained relatively stable, the demand for programming has increased significantly. Some frequent user groups include people working from home, parents with small kids, after school students, older adults who come from Linden Ponds on a bus twice a week.

Year	# of adults attending library programs	# of children attending children’s programs	Total # of visits
2013			
2014			
2015			
2016			
2017			
2018	20,351	12,000	252,216

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

In keeping with national trends, the Library would like to become more of a Community Center with programming for all ages, appropriate spaces for children, technology and a café space (currently have a small vending area only)<sup>12</sup>.

The Library completed an extensive study of library needs and alternative locations, and concluded that the current location is ideal because it is located in the center of Town within walking distance from the High School. The most critical needs for the future include:

- Fifty additional parking spaces (could examine how to expand on the existing site)
- Quiet spaces and collaboration spaces (none currently exist)
- Plugs, outlets
- Café area
- Memory Café for residents with Alzheimer's and their caretakers
- Updated spaces for teaching computers
- Adequate and more staff spaces
- Space for nursing mothers
- More bathrooms
- Custodian space

Additionally, the Library's Long Range Plan identifies the following improvements for the future: the "development of new offerings for patrons, prudent continuing adaptation of technology and greater collaboration with Town departments and community organizations and to be a community center and destination where residents of all ages can meet to exchange ideas, discuss issues and enjoy a non-partisan atmosphere."<sup>13</sup>

## RECREATION

The Recreation Center, located in Town Hall, is comprised of a gymnasium, game room, two studios and the Fitness Center. The Recreation Center operates seven days per week and for more than a 100 hours per week. The outdoor facilities includes a playground, street hockey rink, tennis, basketball and volleyball courts, and soccer and baseball fields. A lack of parking has been a concern, but there may be an opportunity to add parking to Haley Field that is located in close proximity to the facility; a walkway could be created to connect the parking lot to Town Hall. The operationally self-funded Department utilizes a revolving account to fund recreation programs.

In addition to overseeing the Recreation Center at Town Hall, the Recreation Department manages the newly renovated Rec Barn that is located directly behind Town Hall at 341 Main Street. The Rec Barn offers public restrooms and a new multi-purpose program room that is home to the Department's summer camp program, dance school, and a variety of adult fitness classes.

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<sup>12</sup> The Library also offers a significant number of off-site programs including:

- Monthly programs at Linden Ponds for older adults (tech help, lectures, etc.); Senior Center (technology petting zoo)
- Arts Walk – children's activities; Farmer's Market
- Children's Librarian program at pre-school; Teen Librarian program at the high school

<sup>13</sup> Hingham Public Library, *Long Range Plan* 2016-2020.

The Recreation Department managed the Town pool located at the South Shore Country Club. (Due to the pool's aging infrastructure, it will be permanently closed starting summer 2020 and a potential new pool complex will not be built until 2023). Each summer a team of life guards are hired to staff swim lessons and to oversee "open swim" to its more than 500 members. The Department is also responsible for:

- Over 30 acres of athletic fields
- Twelve tennis courts
- Five public playgrounds
- Five outdoor basketball courts
- One outdoor hockey rink
- One outdoor volleyball court

The Hingham Recreation Department provides recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities, offers both athletic and non-athletic activities, and has as a goal to provide recreational facilities throughout the Town so that all residents may have access to them. The Department plans, coordinates, and executes over 300 self-funded programs per year. This includes extremely well attended summer camps attracting more than 2,200 children, 30 adult fitness classes per week, 45 dance classes per week, 200 yearly children's programs, aquatic programs, school enrichment programs, and the July 4<sup>th</sup> Road Race. Although many of these programs are offered at the Recreation Center, the Department also oversees off-site programming at the South Shore Country Club, Schools, and the Harbor. The Recreation Department also co-programs with elder services and the South Shore Country Club and plans to continue and expand this collaboration in the future.

The Recreation Department is working in partnership with the Board of Selectmen and School Department to conduct a Town-wide ***Athletic Fields Study***. The Town of Hingham owns and maintains over 50 acres of athletic fields. These fields serve the Hingham community across a wide range of organized and recreational usage. There has been continued and sustained demand for these fields from many different youth and adult organizations. Because of this demand, the Town should evaluate its ability to meet the current as well as future needs of the community to ensure its ability to grow and adapt. This study will be completed sometime in 2020.

See the Chapter 6 on Recreation and Open Space for more details regarding recreation facilities and resources.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

The Fire Department, the Police Department, and Emergency Medical Service (located at the Central Fire Station) are part of a Regional Dispatch Center. The Towns of Hull, Norwell, and Cohasset are also part of the regional system that rents space in Hingham's Town Hall. There is a need for some additional space. One of the significant benefits of this arrangement has been over \$10 million in state funding over the last 8 years; however, there needs to be some clarity as to who owns the dispatch equipment and who maintains it.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

Hingham is served by three fire stations, all built in 1941. The North (#2) Fire Station is the primary station, serving northwestern Hingham, including the shipyard area, the commuter boat terminal, Hingham Square, portions of several historic districts, and a railroad tunnel. Central Station was completely renovated and added onto in 2018. Both North and South Stations have deteriorated.

The Asset Review Committee and the Fire Station Building Committee have recommended a three-part modernization of the Fire Department facilities, beginning with the renovation of the existing North Station. This would be followed by the construction of a new station in the Cushing, Whiting, and Derby Streets area, and the renovation of the existing South Station.

The Fire Department currently has 57 FTEs who work out of the three (3) stations.

**Headquarters/Station #1** underwent a major renovation 10 years ago. There are a number of outstanding facility issues that require attention including problems with the heating system, a leaking roof, and an aging boiler.

**Stations #2 & #3** were most recently renovated in 2000. These stations are in need of living use upgrades, including bathrooms and kitchen. There is no sprinkler system in the stations. Additionally the bays are too tight, there is not enough storage, and no training or workout space. Multiple studies have recommended replacing the stations or conducting major renovations of them.

According to the Fire Chief, an ideal location for Station #2 would be in West Hingham in the Route 3A area; however, the Town would need to purchase a parcel. A feasibility study conducted by Dore and Whittier Architects concluded that the Fire Station will need a larger footprint. Relocating to land where the Water Company is located may be an option.

About 2% of the Department's budget is spent on fire fighting. The Department has plans to expand public education in coordination with the schools and would also like to provide mobile integrated health care, more preventive medicine, and to expand home safety visits program with the Board of Health.

**Calls for Service.** The number of calls for service has been increasing (see Table 7.5) and is expected to continue to increase from the number of medical calls increasing due, in large part, to the increase in the older population. The Department receives approximately 4,800 calls per year. Seventy percent (70%) of these calls are EMS transports and approximately 2,000 are medical calls. The Department has two full-time ambulance paramedics.

Currently the Department cannot meet the industry standard of a 4-minute response time to the Industrial Park and sometimes to Linden Pond (where many older adults live). Response times in South Hingham are significantly worse (up to 7 minutes) than in the rest of Hingham. The additional development planned and expected in this part of Town may mean that one of the stations should be relocated.

It is expected that in the future, if growth continues at the current rate, the Town may need a fourth station.

<b>Table 7.5 Hingham Fire Department- Calls for Service: 2015-2019</b>					
	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Total Calls</b>	4333	4372	4389	4433	4616
<b>EMS Calls</b>	1883	2018	1952	2375	2810
<b>Ambulance Transports</b>	1726	1846	1766	2025	1980
<b>Linden Ponds</b>	172	238	246	669	590
<b>Gave Mutual Aid</b>	353	314	257	363	320
<b>Received Mutual Aid</b>	80	110	127	109	80
Source: Hingham Fire Department					

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Police Department is located in the Municipal Complex, adjacent to the Town Hall offices. The space is not adequate to meet the Department’s needs. The layout is not conducive to supporting police work:

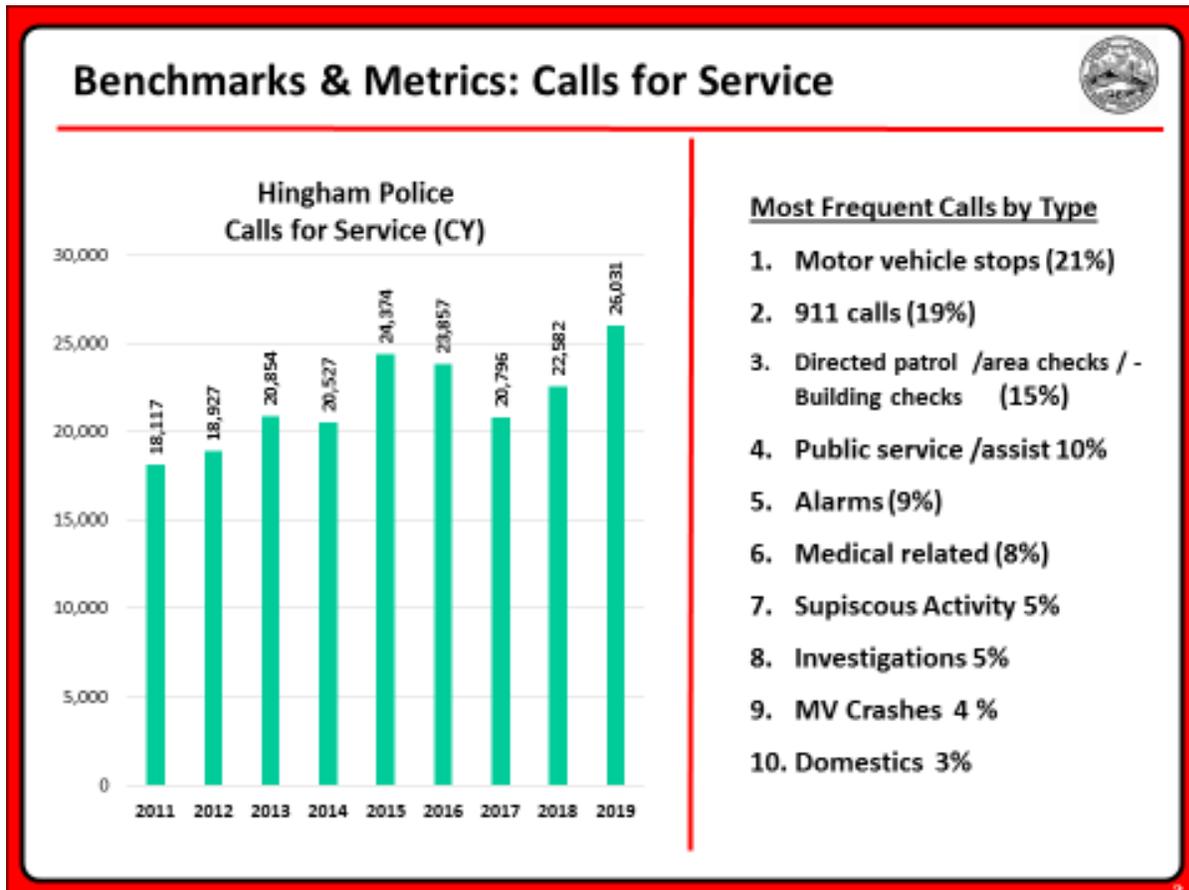
- There is limited space for private interview with reporting parties.
- There is no training space or dedicated gym space.
- The locker room is inadequate for current size of the department. (There are not enough lockers or space.)
- There is a reported need for storage space and a holding facility for confiscated items.
- Additional equipment is needed to bring the evidence room into compliance.
- Parking in the complex is so limited they reportedly cannot have meetings at the police station during the day due to a lack of parking space.

Police records are kept upstairs with limited public access. Much of the public interface takes place on-line, but there are still instances where face-to-face interaction is necessary. Additionally, the parking, which is located in the back of the building, is not adequate for police vehicles and personal vehicles, and there is a need for additional garage space; currently there is only one garage and nineteen Police vehicles. Foul balls from the baseball field reportedly often hit cruisers and personal vehicles.

The Police Department is currently staffed by 53 officers. The Police Chief feels that an additional officer would help the Department to be more effective, and he sees the need for 60 officers in the future. This increased need is due to the fact that the Department is increasingly involved in policing large events<sup>14</sup> and many of the calls for service have become more complex (e.g. mental health, drugs, technology, fraud), therefore requiring more of an officer’s time. The growing demographics of Hingham will also require additional officer needed to deal with the increasing number of senior citizens and a growing special needs population.

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<sup>14</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> of July events, road construction projects, athletic events, school events, voting/elections, Christmas in the Square, Taste of Hingham, Bare Cove Park Remediation Project



*Types are grouped into similar categories to show the top ten types of calls.*

**Calls for Service.** According to the Police Chief, the majority of calls have to do with traffic violations. Hingham has 23 miles of roads, including three miles of state designated roadway. The Traffic Division is designed to reduce accidents through enforcement of traffic laws. High accident locations have been identified and the Department continues to work with the state to make road safety improvements throughout the town. They are currently working on the Route 3A Corridor, which includes the Bathing Beach area, Rotary, and Summer Street.

As is evident in Table 7.6 on the following page, calls for service have been increasing, especially since the Shipyard has been developed (both commercially and with an increase in the number of residents). South Hingham has increased development along the Rt. 53 and open land along the Derby Street Corridor have large commercial development plans in progress. The industrial park is transitioning from manufacturing to medical offices, educational, and service related business. These areas as well as Derby Street Shoppes continue to show increases in calls, especially with regard to traffic accidents and shoplifting.

The Department has taken a regional approach to opioid addiction and mental health issues by helping develop the Plymouth County Outreach and Hub Initiative (comprised of 27 communities). From 2017 to 2019, Hingham has had three fatal opioid overdoses, 25 non-fatal opioid overdoses and eight opioid at-risk referrals.

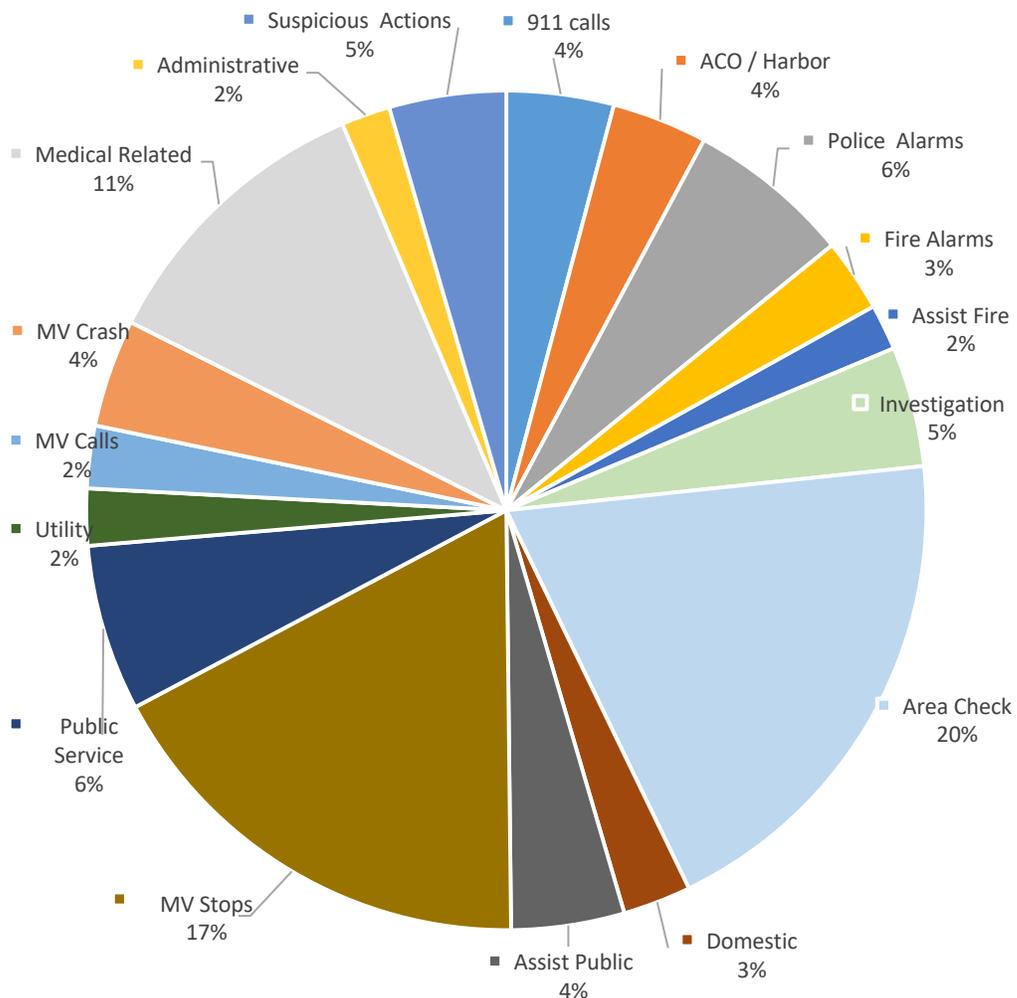
The Department expects the calls for service to continue to rise both due to the increase in the older population as well as to expected additional residential development in Town.

As evident in Figure 7.1, the majority of calls have to do with traffic violations. The Traffic Division has identified high accident locations and is in the process of working with the state to make improvements to Route 3A in several locations.

**Most Frequent Calls by Type**

- **Motor vehicle stops (21%)**
- **911 calls (19%)**
- **Building area checks (15%)**
- **Medical related (8%)**

**Figure 7.1. Types of Police Calls, 2018**



Year	Number of Calls for Service
2011	18,117
2012	18,927
2013	20,854
2014	20,527
2015	24,374
2016	23,857
2017	20,796
2018	22,582
2019	26,031
Source: Hingham Police Department	

The Police Chief feels that a new facility is needed and that it would be convenient if it were to be located in a central location such as on Main Street, Lincoln Street, or Cushing Street (at the former light building location). The station should have sufficient room for the next 20 years and should include a classroom large enough to hold regional training so that they can host training classes. Job retention and recruitment are growing concerns in policing and new adequate facilities are part of helping to keep existing officers as well as in attracting new recruits. It would also make sense to build a facility that would provide adequate space for the Regional Dispatch facilities.

**Harbormaster.** The Office of the Harbormaster is the marine division of the Police Department supervised by the Chief of Police. The Harbormaster is responsible for administrative and enforcement work in the protection of the Town’s waterways and natural resources. The Harbormaster:

- enforces laws, regulations, and policies governing navigable waters, islands, and shorefronts of the town;
- protects the harbor environment, life and property;
- manages the shoreline, islands, and departmental properties;
- implements the Town's Shellfish Management Plan, protects and develops shellfish areas, and monitors the activities of licensed persons in harvesting shellfish.

The Harbormaster is assisted by a part-time Clerk, full-time Head Assistant Harbormaster, and numerous part-time Assistant Harbormasters which vary from year to year. As of this report there is a need for about twelve (12) Assistant Harbormasters annually.

There are approximately 1500 vessels moored in Hingham Waterways, of which approximately 600 are moored at slips. There are five (5) mooring areas each with a fully optimized mooring layout designed to maximize mooring capacity taking into consideration desirability, vessel specifications, and environmental concerns. The Mooring Plans and Mooring Regulations are periodically updated by the Harbormaster.

The Office of the Harbormaster is located in the Foss Intermodal Transportation Building in the Shipyard. This is rented property from the MBTA. The Harbormaster also maintains small shed at the inner harbor. They maintain three boats — Marine I (new 2011), Marine II (new 1997), and Marine III (new 2006), and various other pieces of equipment. Over the next 20 years these boats will require replacement. The Town will also require a smaller shallow draft boat that can provide better access to rivers areas. The boats are currently stored outside, but inside storage should be considered so off-season repairs can be completed. The boats are out of the water from December until March.

Marine III is also known as the pump-out boat which removes and discards waste from boats in the harbor. This is an important program to aid in keeping Hingham waters clean. This program received federal and state reimbursement.

The Harbormaster is the custodian of five (5) islands, in Town — Bumpkin, Langley, Sara, Ragged, and Button. Campers can visit Bumpkin Island with a permit from the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Langley with a permit from the Harbormaster.

The Harbormaster manages all transient mooring in Town. Reservations are made online and the Harbormaster through his staff confirms rental during routine patrols.

Every ten years, the Harbormaster dredges the Inner Harbor Mooring Basin. This was last performed in 2019 at a cost of about 4 million. The private marinas within the Inner Harbor Mooring Basin were not dredged in 2019 because the material was not suitable for offshore disposal and the marinas did not make appropriate plans to piggy back off the Town's dredging project. This is the only location the Town dredges. In anticipation of dredging every ten years the revenues generated by the waterways are deposited into the Waterways Improvement and Maintenance Fund consistent with M.G.L. c. 40 § 5G.

The boating Season is from May 1 until October 1. During this time the harbormaster is on call 24/7. The Harbormaster is routinely available outside of the boating season 24/7 for response. Outside of the Boating Season, the Harbormaster works a flexible schedule to compensate for the boating season demands and on-call nature of the position.

According to the Harbormaster, over the next 20 years, the following can be anticipated at the Harbormaster's Office and on the waterways.

- Upgrades and repairs to Marine I
- Replacement of Marine II
- Replacement of Marine III
- Need indoor over winter storage for a Marine I;
- New 17-25-foot shallow water response boat;
- Repair and/or replacement of Town Wharfs taking into consideration higher tides and storm surge;
- Replacement and Improvements to the Harbormaster Shed in the Inner Harbor;
- Replacement of the Public Access Facility (Boat Ramp);
- Increased public access at Langley Island facilitating more camping;
- Increased public transportation on the waterways and the coastline to and from Boston as well as other municipalities and within town;
- Additional staff ;Full-time Clerk;
- Continued development of the camera system; and
- Continued consideration of purchasing waterfront facilities throughout Town with special consideration to the Inner Harbor.

The boat ramp is in disrepair and is in need of replacement. The Department's request to the public access board to replace the boat ramp has been on a waiting list for over ten years and is expected to come to fruition in the next few years.

The Harbormaster's role in the community continues to increase. Since approximately 2009, the sailing and rowing program, both private and public, continue to occupy the months immediate before and after the Boating Season requiring the Harbormaster to fill more patrols. World's End Mooring Area has upwards of 600 transient boats visiting over a summer weekend. Law enforcement activities and investigations continue to increase. Shellfish duties have been almost nonexistent since 2012 and have not been budgeted. These factors, combined with a high turnover rate of Assistant Harbormasters due to excellent on-the-job training and experience, makes this position a great training ground for future police officers.

**South Shore Emergency Communications Center.** The SSRECC is responsible for all public safety communications and dispatching for the four regional towns of Hingham, Hull, Norwell and Cohasset. They handle all Emergent 911 calls for the four communities as well as police and fires services. They occupy a space on the second floor of the Town Hall. The SSRECC is funded through assessments to each town based on town populations and calls for service. Hingham Police and Fire are responsible for approximately 47 percent of the costs.

There are approximately 20 employees that work three shifts, seven days a week, 365 days a year. The day shift has the most workers that also park in the municipal lot. The facility pays rent and some payroll services to the town. They are not considered town employees, as the SSRECC required legislative approval to operate as a separate facility.

There are current plans to expand the SSRECC by adding in new towns. The Center has the capacity to handle two additional towns but would require an addition of six (6) to eight (8) employees. They parking in the town hall facilities once again this is reported as being an issue.

The goal of the State is to continue to regionalize dispatch centers. They are using grant funds to help incentivize towns to join regional centers. E911 fund are collected through cell phone usage to fund these grants. It is expected that the funding will be supported for the next ten years. At this time the State is not offering grants for capital expenditures to replace aging infrastructure. .

**Animal Control.** The Town of Hingham has 1 full-time Animal Control Officer (ACO). The Animal Control Officer is responsible for all injured, sick, and deceased animals in the Town of Hingham. The Animal Control office space was originally located in the Town Hall, but was recently moved to the Town's Police Department. Animal Control now shares an office with two other officers and one mental health counselor. As both the Animal Control Officer and Animal Inspector for the Town of Hingham, the Department has responded to over 700+ calls annually. The Department keeps files of animal bite quarantines, kennel and barn inspections, plus other animal related reports. There is only have one filing cabinet, and the rest of the paperwork and equipment are the Animal Control Officer's truck or in storage.

The Animal Control Department would like a dedicated office and a small holding facility or attached room to an office that can be made into a small kennel area for holding animals, until the owner is found

or the animal is transferred to shelter or rescue for adoption. The Animal Control Officers in the Town’s of Hull, Cohasset, Norwell ‘s Animal Control Officers have expressed an interest in the possibility of a regionalized small holding facility; each would pay a monthly or yearly fee to use it. Hingham, Hull, Cohasset and Norwell pick up between 5-15 stray dogs a month. The majority of these are returned to their homes, but sometimes that can take up to 1 to 48 hours or longer to locate the owners. On occasion they come across other stray animals that need to be held. Currently they rely on local boarding facilities not always able to accommodate the Department’s needs. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the ACO to remove deceased animals that would be considered a hazard to drivers or citizens and children. The ACOs in Weymouth, Braintree, Norwell, Cohasset, Hull, and Rockland have all expressed an interest in a regional incinerator to properly deal with animal disposal. The ACO Department needs access to a proper incinerator and large freezer chest for any deceased animal that needs to be held. Regionalization of the incinerator and boarding facilities could provide a future source of income to the town. Towns that use the incinerator would be expected to either pay a monthly or a yearly fee.

The ACO also reports needing an updated computer system to track dog licenses and rabies certification. Currently this is done by the Town Clerk. The ACO also believes that the role should be expanded to handle dog licensing and to track dog licensing and rabies vaccinations by computer. With the reported increase in dog and pet populations, it seems to be necessary to modernize the town by-laws to meet modern standards.

**OTHER TOWN-OWNED BUILDINGS**

As listed in Table 7.7, the Town owns several buildings that are either underutilized or not being used at all. Some may have environmental issues, which depending on the desired re-use, may need to be addressed. There may be an opportunity to sell one or more of these properties to help meet other needs.

<b>Table 7.7. Additional Town-owned Buildings and Parcels</b>	
Building/Parcel	Comments
Building 12 at the Depot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industrial arts and woodworking program run by the High School offered</li> <li>Given to the Town by the federal government, some clean up of contaminants has been completed</li> </ul>
Building 179 at the Depot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by School Department</li> <li>Given to the Town by the federal government; some cleanup of contaminants has been completed</li> </ul>
Former Light Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to the site is challenging through a narrow driveway</li> </ul>
Former DPW (Building #104)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May have environmental issues</li> <li>DPW uses the building for off-season vehicle and equipment storage (e.g. snowplows are stored here during warm weather months)</li> <li>Some renters have expressed interest</li> </ul>
Bear Cover Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May have some environmental issues</li> </ul>
Fort Hill Street parcel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
3A parcel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be too sloped for some uses</li> </ul>
Beal Street parcel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
Source: various documents and interviews	

**DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN’S SERVICES AND MUNICIPAL FLAGPOLES AND MONUMENTS**

Hingham’s Veteran’s Agent provides counseling and assistance to Hingham’s veterans, administering benefits, counseling, and providing assistance including emergency financial assistance to veteran’s in need. Table 7.7 lists veteran and war memorials located in Hingham, identifies the party responsible for the maintenance of each and any other relevant information. Municipal flagpoles are also listed. There is a lack of plan for the maintenance of the memorials. Many of the stones are set in a planting bed that needs to be periodically maintained. DPW cares for these.



<b>Table 7.7. Additional Town-owned Buildings and Parcels</b>	
<b>Military, Veteran and War Memorials</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
Veteran’s Memorial – Benches-2 / Masonry - Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2019 \$9,800 in emergency repairs was funded through private donations. A condition assessment is needed and a schedule of routine maintenance, means and methods is needed.</li> </ul>
War Memorial Stones -4 / Plaques-4 Has a Eternal Flame (Gas Lamp) Matthew Hawkes Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aside from the Bourne National Cemetery Hingham is the only town in the commonwealth with an Eternal Flame. It is a gas lamp and is in need of maintenance. In addition, the maintenance procedures should be documented in writing.</li> </ul>
Grand Army Memorial Hall – Cannon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The building is on lease to the town from the Army. In the past Eagle Scouts have done some maintenance projects. The Army inspects every three years and if they feel we are not maintaining it they have the right to rescind the lease.</li> </ul>
Central Fire Station – Stone / Plaque	
War Memorial Stone / Plaque - William H. Newey Park	
POW / MIA Memorial Stone / Plaque – Harbor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Spring of 2020 this is being moved to the Whitney Wharf.</li> </ul>
War Memorial Statue / Stone / Plaque – Victory Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This commemorates the King Phillip War</li> </ul>
Memorial Stones / Benches-2 / Plaque –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The flagpole is in need of repair now</li> <li>DCR mows this area twice a year</li> </ul>

<b>Table 7.7. Additional Town-owned Buildings and Parcels</b>	
<b>Military, Veteran and War Memorials</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
Eugene F. Creedon Park	
YF-415 Memorial Stone / Plaque – Bare Cove Park	
Rhodes Circle – Stone / Plaque	
Chase Memorial Stone / Plaque – PRS	
MG Benjamin Lincoln Stone / Plaque – Fountain Square	
Chief Carlson Memorial Stone / Plaque – Bare Cove Park	
USMC K-9 Memorial – Stone-3 / Plaque-3 - Bare Cove, DPW	
Revolutionary War Monument – Ft. Hill Cemetery?	
Civil War Monument - Hingham Cemetery?	
Foss Monument  Bronze bust and plaque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located in the DCR Intermodal terminal</li> </ul>
Whitney Wharf, (Selectmen’s’ parcel)  8 electric streetlamps (in disrepair)  Benches, anchor and 5 flagpoles (1 is new and 4 need immediate maintenance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The flagpoles and light poles need immediate maintenance.</li> </ul>

**Municipal Flagpoles** should be assessed for condition and then maintained by the DPW or their agent regularly. There is not a budget or maintenance schedule at this time for these facilities, and at least six need serious repair at this time. Consideration should be given to allocating money annually so that a few can be assessed and maintained every few years on a rotating schedule. This might include painting, checking stability, replacing ropes, etc. The Veterans Agent presently purchases flags at a discounted rate in bulk and extends that rate to Town Departments and others to assist them as they replace old or damaged flags.

<b>Table 7.9 Municipal Flagpoles</b>	
<b>Flagpoles</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Mathew Hawkes Square	1
Victory Park	1
William H. Newey Park	1
Eugene F. Creedon Memorial Park	1 – This flagpole is in disrepair and needs work.
Whitney Wharf	5 — One will be new and the four existing are in disrepair; the estimate for the work is \$3,948.
POW / MIA Memorial – Harbor	0 – this one is moving to Whitney Wharf in Spring 2020 with the stone.
Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Hall	1
South Shore Country Club	2
Hingham Public Library	1
DPW	1
HMLP	1
Bare Cove Park	3 [Carlson; Gate House; YF-415 Memorial]
Elementary Schools -	4 [East, South, PRS, Foster]
Middle School	1
High School	4
Fire Stations	3 [Central, Torrent, Constitution]
Recreation Fields	6 [Hersey, Lynch, Haley, Cronin, Margetts, Kress]  The flagpoles at Margetts and Lynch Fields are not working at all and require immediate maintenance.

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Department of Public Works is responsible for the care and maintenance of public roadways, sidewalks, drainage systems, shade trees, parks, grounds, recreation fields, athletic fields, the Town's Recycling and Trash Transfer Facility, and snow and ice control on all public (and certain private) roadways. There are approximately 140 miles of public roads, approximately 20 miles of private roadways, 60 miles of sidewalk, and approximately 10,000 public shade trees in town.

The Department of Public Works acquired a new building in 2010. The building reportedly has plenty of office space (two floors) and equipment storage and garage and maintenance space for 50-60 vehicles and pieces of equipment. However, off-season equipment is stored in the old facility that is unheated and the roof needs work.

DPW mows the athletic fields, maintains the baseball fields and tennis courts at the Country Club, all of the Town's playgrounds, and the grounds of Town Hall and the Library. The Department plows all of the Town's municipal facilities and the sidewalks to schools and the downtown.

The Department has recently instituted a Customer Service tracking software for residents to request the Department's attention to matters under their jurisdiction.

DPW is involved in US EPA's Storm Water Phase II Rule, which regulates the discharge of storm water into the waterways, and is involved in developing a Stormwater Management Plan. The Department has mapped 75% of the catch basins, but still needs to identify additional catchments.

The Town's Engineer is responsible for sea wall reinforcements. A study is currently underway to identify where and in which order these reinforcements will need to be made.

Approximately twenty pieces of DPW equipment need updating. Vehicles are updated on a schedule in order to ensure proper functioning; however the replacement schedule was changed from every eight years to every ten years due to budgetary constraints. The Superintendent would like to return to the eight-year schedule to refurbish and replace vehicles and equipment.

## HIGHWAY DIVISION

The Highway Division is staffed by 48 FTEs including an Engineering Department.

The Division has developed a Pavement Management 5 Year Plan and a Sidewalk Improvement Plan. Additional development is increasing pressure on most of the older sidewalks and triggers the need to comply with ADA from 4ft. to 5 ft. wide. Reportedly there are many areas in Town that are lacking in sidewalks. Some schools participate in the Safe Routes to School, but most do not. There are no fees for taking the bus and most high school students have their own car.

School buses would be available for use during the day to support additional town transportation services to older adults and to residents in general.

**TRANSFER STATION**

The Transfer Station was established approximately 40 years ago. There is no curbside pick up. The amount of all materials processed at the Station is increasing, as is the cost of recycling. The Town must now pay for all recycling except for cardboard and market rate costs are rising.

A relatively small SWAP station is located out of vehicle traffic, with approximately 20 parking spaces and a time limit as to how long residents may visit the station. There are volunteer staff to enforce the rules, who reportedly often confront difficulties when trying to do so (e.g. residents push back on time limit, many residents in Town are contractors and attempt to use the facility for free, people try to get around the rule which says that if materials weigh over a specified amount of pounds, a permit must be purchased, etc.)

The former landfill is now closed and the trash building has been converted into a bailing facility for recycling materials. This saves money as the Town can bail materials especially useful now given the recent requests from China requiring that materials be clean.

**SEWER/WASTEWATER TREATMENT**

The Hingham Sewer Commission provides sewer service to two sewer districts: approximately 2,500 residences and/or businesses in the North Sewer District (NSD) and 180 residences and/or businesses in the Weir River Sewer District (WRSD). The Sewer Department currently maintains about 30 miles of sewer pipe and thirteen pump stations. These two districts are distinctively different based on geographical location and discharge points. Approximately 40% of the town is on Town sewer in these districts; both are located in the northern part of Hingham. See Table 7.10 for the system’s average capacity and usage.

- 1) North Hingham Sewer District was created in 1956 and has approximately 2,500 service connection’s comprised of businesses and residences. There are seventeen sewer pumping stations within the North Hingham Sewer District; thirteen sewer pumping stations are owned and operated by the Hingham Sewer Department, and the others are privately owned and maintained. The flow from these sewer stations and connections is pumped directly to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority’s (MWRA) Stoddard’s Neck Sewer Pump Station in Weymouth. Stoddard’s Neck Sewer Station has a capacity of approximately 6.1 MGD. The actual peak usage for this District has been approximately 5.8 MGD.
  
- 2) Weir River Sewer District. There is sewer service provided for approximately 275 houses in the West Corner section of Town. The flow from this district, combined with the flow from approximately 300 houses in Cohasset goes to the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Hull. The Hingham-Hull Inter-Municipal agreement terminates in 2022 and is anticipated to be re-negotiated before termination. At present, there is no additional capacity available in the Weir River Sewer District. One possible option to increase capacity is to develop an inter-municipal agreement with Town of Cohasset.

<b>Table 7.10. Hingham Wastewater Treatment Capacity and Usage</b>		Source: Hingham Department of Public Works
Capacity (MGD)	Actual Usage (MGD)	
6.1	5.8	

It should be noted that the rest of the Town utilizes individual septic systems.

The Sewer Commission has a 5-year capital replacement plan for sewer infrastructure including facilities and equipment. The Sewer Commission is also working on reducing Infiltration and Inflow (unwanted water flowing or pumped into the sewer system). Additionally, six to eight sewer pumping stations have been identified as being vulnerable to sea level rise<sup>15</sup> and will need to be addressed by 2030.

Other more immediate needs are replacing the approximately 60-year-old Lincoln Street force main on Rt. 3A. This sewer main needs to be replaced and a larger pipe installed to help increase flow capacity. Installing Variable Frequency Drives (VFD's) can also increase capacity by keeping pumps running and maintaining the flow at an even pace, thus using less power and keeping the peak daily flow at a lower level.

In 2011 the Town merged Sewer under DPW. The Sewer Commission sets the rates, and user fees collected for the sewer go to the Town general fund. Other connection fees are deposited into Inflow & Infiltration (I & I) fund to mitigate I & I. The MWRA also has a grant/loan funding program that contributes to the mitigation of I & I.

There have been some discussions of developing a South Hingham Sewer District. This is a challenge as there is no infrastructure such as pipes in the ground and/or sewer treatment facilities. If the Town were to construct a Wastewater Treatment Plant, a location would need to be identified and the Town may need to purchase the land. Another option is to negotiate with MWRA for additional capacity for the Town of Hingham, even though the MWRA prefers not to increase flow into their system. Financing for this sewer infrastructure could be paid for through betterments. The Derby Street Shops have a wastewater treatment system, but are currently having some trouble running their package wastewater treatment plant so this may not be a viable solution.

## WATER

The Town voted to purchase the water system in the Spring of 2019. The Aquarion Water Company ("Aquarion") supplies water to 42 cities and towns throughout Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. The part of the company that services Hingham is referred to as "Service Area A" and includes Hingham, Hull, 330 homes in North Cohasset, and four homes in Norwell. The majority of homes (95%) in the Town of Hingham are connected to the public water system, and many residences that are currently on individual wells are asking to join the public system. Water is also supplied to the entire Town of Hull and to approximately one-third of Cohasset residents.

Aquarion's Hingham/Hull finished water distribution system consists of approximately 192 miles of water mains ranging in diameter from two to twenty inches. These mains are constructed of various materials; the system also includes twelve active supply sources, one emergency supply source, two water storage facilities, and a water treatment facility.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Kleinfelder, *Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study*, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Tata and Howard, *Capital Efficiency Plan Update*, Aquarion Water Company, November 2014.

Expansion of the water system distribution pipe network currently only takes place when a developer requests and pays for a connection to extend the main, or to loop dead end water main to increase system reliability, water quality, and fire flow availability. All of the current water supply sources serving the Aquarion water system are located in the Weir River watershed, which has been classified as a “stressed basin.” With the implementation of annual water restrictions for responsible watershed management and stewardship, many residents in Hingham have elected to install their own individual irrigation wells, which only results in removing more water from the watershed. In the future, residents could petition the Town for water main extensions to be funded by means of a betterment; this process could begin now that the Town is taking over the management of the water.

The Aquarion Water System has a Registration Statement from the Water Management Act. The WMA Registration Statement allows a combined withdrawal of 3.51 MGD from all Registered Sources. As is evident in Table 7.11, the Town is well within the allowed millions of gallons per day withdrawal.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Withdrawal (MG)	1266.36	1247.43	1164.31	1154.57	1184.69	1153.91
Withdrawal (MGD)	3.47	3.42	3.18	3.16	3.25	3.16
Source: Aquarion Water Company						

The 2014 Town-wide Master Plan Update recommended that the Town develop a Water Management Strategy.<sup>17</sup> This has been completed and includes: (a) an inventory of current and potential municipal sources of water supply, (b) an assessment of the adequacy of existing and proposed water supplies to meet projected demands, (c) an assessment of the ability of stormwater regulations and practices to limit off-site stormwater runoff to levels substantially similar to natural hydrology through decentralized management practices and the protection of on-site natural features, (d) an analysis of municipal need and capacity for wastewater disposal, including the suitability of sites and water bodies for the discharge of treated wastewater, and (e) recommended strategies for water supply provisions and protection, water conservation, wastewater disposal, stormwater management, drought management and emergency interconnections, and needed improvements to meet future water resource needs. A recent report on Community Resilience<sup>18</sup> recommends strategies for protecting the quality and quantity of potable groundwater and surface water supply, including:

- Identifying additional sources of water supply;
- Reducing water usage within the Town;
- Establishing emergency water distribution sites;
- Educating homeowners on testing of private wells; and
- Educating private well owners and developing a bylaw related to irrigation.

A Water Supply and Distribution System Study comparing future water demands and the maximum yield of current supply sources revealed the need for additional water by the year 2025. In addition, the

<sup>17</sup> MAPC, *Hingham Master Plan Update*: 2014, p. 39.

<sup>18</sup> Beals & Thomas, *Summary of Findings: Community Resilience Building*, June 26, 2019.

analysis incorporated anticipated changes in storage capacity within the system and fluctuations in source pumping capacity. A capital improvement plan including prioritized recommendations and budget estimates for system upgrades necessary to correct existing deficiencies and meet future needs has been prepared.

Among the study recommendations (and still relevant) are the following:<sup>19</sup>

- Evaluate water supply needs based upon existing and projected demands and existing source capacity.
- Assess water storage needs based upon existing and future demands and fire flow requirements.
- Evaluate potential impacts of pending state regulations on water system operations.
- Estimate projected populations based upon available information from the Town Clerk's Offices, Town Planning Boards, MAPC, MISER and U.S. Census Bureau.
- Recommend distribution system improvements to meet the existing and future needs of Hingham, Hull and Cohasset.

There is an annual water main replacement program. Currently, there is the need for a third storage tank, and there will be a need for a new source of water in the next ten years. However, it will be difficult to find a new source within the watershed, as it is overutilized. There are annual irrigation restrictions during the summer months when necessary.

#### HINGHAM MUNICIPAL LIGHTING PLANT

The Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant Operations Center is located at 31 Bare Cove Park Drive in a new building constructed in 2016. The capacity is expected to be adequate for the next 20 years given the current growth trends. However, looking further ahead the Lighting Plant will need additional capacity due to a number of plans and trends including the following: 1) the State's carbon reduction plan, 2) the Town's stated but not yet enacted goal to be carbon free by 2050, and 3) the trend moving toward more electric cars and buses.

The Lighting Plant is planning to add another transmission line and sub-station to act as both another back up to make the Lighting Plant more reliable, and to provide additional capacity should the expanded growth come to fruition. Currently both of the two transmission lines are on the same structures, which makes repairs difficult during a storm and vulnerable to an incident in which a catastrophic failure of a single structure would cause both lines to lose power and leave the entire Town without electricity for an extended period. (Imagine if that were to happen in winter — per the 2017 census, over 23,000 people would have no electricity but a lot of frozen pipes). The Lighting Plant is currently working with a team of lawyers, engineers, consultants, and Eversource to add the third transmission line. Between permitting and construction, this project will likely take between 3 and 5 years to complete.

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<sup>19</sup> Tata & Howard, *Water Supply and Distribution System Study*, Aquarion Water Company of Massachusetts, April 2007, p, 1-1.

Currently there are 6 public charging stations and approximately 75 electric cars in the Town. There is some discussion regarding converting the school buses to electric.

Hingham Light offers an on-line reporting system to residents who wish to report a street light outage. They also offer advice and rebates to residents implementing energy saving measures.

## MUNICIPAL MEASURES TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

According to the Hingham has committed to reduce its energy consumption 20% by the year 2024. Of the top ten energy users in Hingham, all are buildings and all six schools are included. The following is a summary of municipal energy uses:<sup>20</sup>

- Total Number of Municipal Buildings: 25 (The largest energy users are the High School, Middle School, and Town Hall, respectively.)
- Open Space: four facilities (The scoreboards for Haley Field and Ward Street Field, The Otis Street Band Stand, and the Bathing Beach comprise this category.)
- Total Number of Municipal Vehicles: 112 (ten of these vehicles are subject to Hingham's Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy, and the current average miles per gallon for these is 19.2 mpg, with the highest 27 mpg and the lowest 17 mpg).
- Total Number of Street Lights and Traffic Lights: 2,331 cobrahead streetlights, 2 school zone speed limit signs, and 7 accounts for traffic lights.
- Water and Sewer: 12 sewer pumping stations (The Broad Cove Pumping Station, consumes (37%) of the energy use for the water and sewer sector.)

Some of the efforts undertaken by the Town to protect the environment and to work towards future resilience include the following:

- Hingham is a designated Green community, for which designation the Town prepared an Energy Reduction Plan.
- The Town recently banned plastic bags.
- Hingham Municipal Light provides free energy audits.
- Solar panels have been installed at the Light Department and there is a contract to install more on the Landfill.
- There is a plan to retrofit Town buildings and schools with LED lighting.
- An Energy Action Committee encourages town energy conservation and the Board of Selectmen asks that the Committee make recommendations on town projects.
- The Board of Selectmen and the Energy Action Committee are working on a plan for reducing carbon emissions.
- A newly established group, the Hingham Net Zero Committee, was formed to support the Town's efforts to cut emissions.

As described in the Climate Change Vulnerability Study: "The Town of Hingham is particularly vulnerable to sea level rise being a coastal community located on Hingham Bay and the edge of Boston Harbor. The

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<sup>20</sup> MAPC, *Town of Hingham Energy Reduction Plan*, October 2018. P. 5.

Hingham coastline has extensive floodplains and estuaries that reach into the inland areas of the town and extensive salt marshes associated with rivers as well as beaches that are subject to tidal action and the effects of storm surge. Sections of the Town subject to potential flooding contain public infrastructure, commercial development and residential areas that can be severely affected by flooding.<sup>21</sup> As a result the Town applied for and was awarded a Coastal Community Resilience Grant from the MA Coastal Zone Management Agency. The project has four key goals:

- Identify areas of the town that are vulnerable to the combined effects of sea level rise and storm surge from extreme storm events.
- Assess the vulnerability of municipally-owned public infrastructure and natural resources.
- Identify adaptation strategies that will help to mitigate the long-term effects of sea level rise and storm surge.
- Educate the public, town officials and state legislators about those potential impacts.

Looking toward the future, the Town will need to prepare for the impacts of Climate Change. This will include protecting and/or relocating some municipal facilities that will be adversely affected. The Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies flooding as the most prevalent natural hazard.<sup>22</sup> Table 7.12 outlines the municipally-owned infrastructure assets that have been identified in the Hingham Climate Change Vulnerability Report<sup>23</sup> as being vulnerable to flooding at the indicated time between the present and 2070. The report lists additional municipal coastal stabilization structures and roadways that are vulnerable to flooding.

<b>Table 7.12. Municipal Infrastructure Assets Vulnerability</b>	
<b>Time Horizon</b>	<b>Facility/Building Name</b>
Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hellport at Bathing Beach</li> <li>• West Corner Pump Station</li> <li>• Hingham Bathing Beach Parking Lot</li> </ul>
2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William L. Foster Elementary School</li> <li>• Mill St. Pump Station</li> <li>• Bell Air Pump Station</li> <li>• Broad Cove Sewer Pump Station</li> <li>• Whitney Wharf</li> </ul>
2070	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beal St. Sewer Pump Station</li> <li>• Downer Ave. Sewer Pump</li> <li>• Howe St. Pump Station</li> <li>• Walton Cover Sewer Pump Station</li> </ul>
Source: Kleinfelder, Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015.	

In addition, the Climate Change Vulnerability report examines the coastal area and the effectiveness of the seawalls to contain the expected sea level rise. The report concludes that: “The seawalls along the

<sup>21</sup> Kleinfelder, Climate Change Vulnerability, *Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study*, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> MAPC, Town of Hingham, *Hazard Mitigation Plan: 2014 Update*, Adopted 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Kleinfelder, *Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study*, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015, p. 17.

Inner Harbor/Iron Horse Park are of varying heights, condition, and construction type. Due to this variation, they provide an inconsistent level of protection for Route 3A, public spaces, and the various public and private infrastructures in the downtown business overlay district behind them. Eight of the twelve structures have critical elevations (meaning the lowest elevation along the top of the structure) which are too low to prevent the 1% flood from exceeding them, even based on present day climate and sea levels. Over time, sea level rise due to climate change will increase the likelihood that the downtown area will experience flooding due in part to the insufficient height of these structures.”<sup>24</sup>

Recommendations for addressing the risks associated with climate change and flooding include the continued monitoring of structures for condition and scour which could be worsened by more frequent and extreme flooding events, regular maintenance as needed, and eventual replacement of structures to be designed to the 2070 projected base flood elevations.

## Issues and Opportunities

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The following is a preliminary identification of issues and opportunities based on this assessment of existing conditions of Hingham’s community facilities and services.

- Some of the Departments housed in the Town Hall complex are in need of more and different types of spaces. Some Departments may need to be relocated.
- The number of older adults is expected to increase significantly. However the Senior Center is not able to accommodate even the current level of attendance that reportedly represents only 14% of the older adult residents. There seem to be a number of reasons for the lack of usage of this facility on the part of many of Hingham’s senior residents, including the fact that the parking is limited and the perception that the Center is oriented towards “frail, older and lower income elders.” There seems to be a need for re-branding in a larger expanded and updated facility. This could be a shared building with the community at large (e.g. Community Center) or a dedicated stand-alone building.
- A Municipal Vulnerability Study determined that by 2030 a number of municipal infrastructure assets will be underwater due to sea level rise and associated flooding. These, which include the Foster School and a number of sewer pump stations will need to be relocated.
- The Library is utilized by a large number of residents and the demand for programming has been increasing. The current amount and type of space limits the ability of the Library to offer additional and different kinds of programs. Parking is also an issue.
- Public Safety facilities are in need of updating and expansion. Additionally, as the number of older adult residents increase, so do the number of calls for public safety service (police, fire and EMS). The Fire Stations are all in need of replacement and/or renovation and the Police Station is inadequate both in terms of size as well as layout.
  
- While the schools for the most part can accommodate the slight increase projected in student enrollment, they will need some deferred maintenance, updating of types of spaces to accommodate more contemporary pedagogical thinking (e.g. STEM, maker spaces, etc.), as well as the need to support special needs, student counseling, and professional training.

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<sup>24</sup> Kleinfeler, Climate Change Vulnerability, Risk Assessment and Adaptation Study, Town of Hingham, June 29, 2015, p. 31.

- The Recreation Department has undertaken a study to identify current and future athletic field priorities. Some of the Town’s playgrounds will need to become ADA compliant (currently only one is fully accessible).
- Further development is planned in South Hingham; however there is no public sewer to support additional residents. A plan for such expansion whether developing a South Hingham Sewer District, constructing a Treatment Plant or other, needs to be developed.
- The Sewer Superintendent is working on reducing infiltration and Inflow which will hopefully lead to increasing the system’s capacity which is reaching its limit.
- The Municipal Light Plant is looking ahead to increase capacity by adding another transmission and sub-station so as to reduce the Town’s carbon footprint and accommodate the trend towards electric cars and buses.
- The Department of Public Works’ key priorities include improving dangerous intersections and reinforcing and adding sea wall reinforcements to mitigate sea level rise.
- Town Shuttle:
  - There is no bus from senior housing (e.g. at Lindon Ponds) to the Senior Center.
  - School buses are available to use for broader town use.
  - Loop for older adults. (Idea: charge for shuttle but give older adults a free pass)
  - Implement a pilot and try to link the harbor to 3A to the shops at “The Square.”
- The Town continues to work to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels, to protect the environment, and to be resilient in the future by mitigating the impacts of climate change.
- Protecting municipal facilities as well as private property from sea level rise will increasingly need to be a priority.
- There seems to be a need to formalize and to further professionalize preventive maintenance and the management of town-owned facilities. Some practices to be considered include:
  - Work with the Permanent Building and Facilities Management Study Committee to explore alternative approaches to prioritize and manage capital improvement projects.
  - Consider hiring a consultant to conduct a town-wide facilities master plan
  - Hire a full-time town employee – a Facilities Manager.
  - Conduct a fiscal impact analysis to determine the impact of growth on facilities and services.
  - Develop criteria regarding how to make decisions regarding capital expenditure priorities.
  - Develop more systematic approach/increase professionalism.
  - Hold a summit meeting with all departments.
  - Form a Consolidated Facilities Committee for a systematic approach to evaluating all municipal facilities.

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## INTERVIEWS

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Donna Smallwood, Master Plan Committee

Paul Heanue, Hingham Municipal Light Plant

Liza O'Reilly, School Committee and Master  
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