

IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

COMMUNITY FACILITIES- A

A. INTRODUCTION

Newtown has a wide array of public, non-profit and private community facilities and services including; General Government services housed in a variety of public buildings, Police, Fire and Emergency Medical services, Schools, Parks and Recreation facilities, Sewer and Water services, library services, etc. The status and needs for improvements to these services are discussed in depth in Plan Memorandum #10, Community Facilities and Plan Memorandum #5 Parks and Recreation.

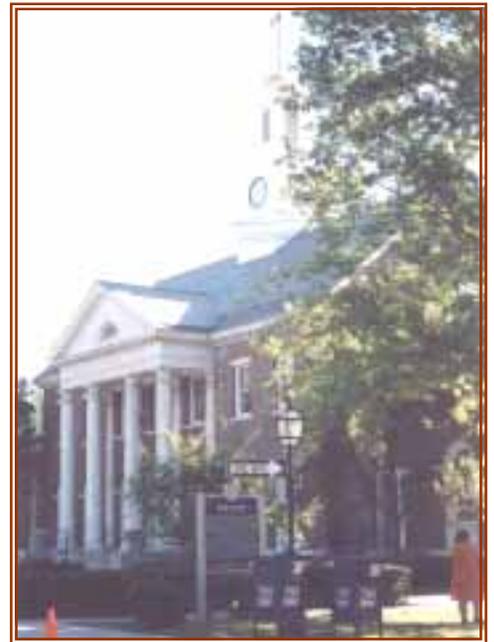
The purpose of this portion of the Plan is to provide a summary of Newtown's community facilities and to recommend ways in which the POCD can address maintaining and making improvements to those resources in light of expected future changes to the Town.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

General Government Facilities

The provision of municipal infrastructure and community facilities is one of the primary functions of town government. The availability, condition, capacity, and cost of municipal infrastructure and community facilities affect Newtown's land use, the density of development and in general, the quality of life of the community. General government functions in Newtown are administered from a variety of locations, including Edmond Town Hall, Town Hall South, Canaan House at Fairfield Hills, the Multi-Purpose Building in Sandy Hook, the Public Works Building on Riverside Road.

Responding to the need to develop a more organized approach to housing municipal government functions, the Town undertook an analysis to identify present and future municipal space needs and develop a strategy to meet those needs. In June of 2001, voters authorized bonding to develop a Town Hall on the Fairfield Hills Campus. This facility would replace Edmond Town Hall and consolidate many municipal government services under one roof. The uses currently being considered to be housed within the Fairfield Hills Town Hall include: Assessor, Community Development Office, Finance, First Selectman's Office, Human Resources, Probate Judge, Registrars of Voters, Tax Collector, Town Clerk, Building Department, Town Engineer, Director of Public Works, Conservation, Fire Marshal, Health District, Land Use Agency and Board of Education. It is possible that other municipal services, such as the Senior Center currently located in the Sandy Hook Multi-Purpose Building may also be relocated to Fairfield Hills.



Newtown's Public Schools

With the opening of the Reed Intermediate School in 2003, the Newtown Public School system consists of four elementary schools serving grades pre-kindergarten through 4, an intermediate school serving grades 5 and 6, a middle school serving grades 7 and 8 and a high school serving

grades 9 through 12. Newtown Board of Education administrative offices and the Alternative High School are currently housed in Canaan House, on the Fairfield Hills Campus.



Hawley Elementary School

Student Enrollment: School enrollment has risen steadily from 3,711 students in the 1993/1994 school year to 5,201 students in the 2002/2003 school year, an increase of 1,490 students. The increase in student enrollment necessitated several school improvement and expansion projects, culminating with the construction of the Reed Intermediate School on the Fairfield Hills Campus, which opened in January of 2003. The Reed Intermediate School houses fifth grade students, who were previously taught in the Town's four elementary schools and sixth grade students, who were previously taught in the Middle School. As a result of the opening of the new Intermediate School and moving grade 6 from the Middle School to the Intermediate School, enrollment in the Middle School has decreased by approximately 1/3. Moving grade 5 from the Town's four elementary schools to the new Intermediate School had the affect of freeing-up additional classrooms at each of the elementary schools. Enrollment projections have been prepared for the Newtown Board of Education indicating continued growth in student enrollment.

Table 11

NEWTOWN SCHOOL FACILITIES
STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY FACILITY

School Facility	School Year									Change 1993-2001
	1993/1994	1994/1995	1995/1996	1996/1997	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	
Hawley Elementary	322	339	349	389	488	525	547	557	546	224
Sandy Hook Elementary	563	564	611	636	638	668	700	723	760	197
Head O'Meadow Elem.	506	547	553	551	550	552	570	576	578	72
Middle-Gate Elementary	475	471	489	495	507	530	539	567	550	75
Middle School	853	888	897	930	953	1,044	1,116	1,186	1,220	367
High School	<u>992</u>	<u>1,012</u>	<u>1,085</u>	<u>1,074</u>	<u>1,125</u>	<u>1,194</u>	<u>1,244</u>	<u>1,332</u>	<u>1,364</u>	<u>372</u>
Totals	3,711	3,821	3,984	4,075	4,261	4,513	4,716	4,941	5,018	1,307

Source: Connecticut Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles; HMA

School Facilities Needs: The Newtown Board of Education has the responsibility for planning for future school facilities. Following the construction of the Reed Intermediate School, it appears that the elementary schools and middle school will have sufficient classroom capacity to accommodate student enrollments for the next ten years. However, based upon the enrollment projections, the High School facility will reach its enrollment capacity beginning in the Fall of 2003 and exceed rated capacity by 440 students by the 2012-2013 school year. To meet the need for additional high school space, the Board of Education has expressed a preference for building a new High School Academy building on the Fairfield Hills Campus, with an enrollment capacity of 500 students. This facility would function as a satellite facility of the existing High School.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

Recreational facilities and activities in Newtown have evolved significantly during the past 20 years in an effort to keep pace with rapid population growth and ever changing community recreational desires. Today, organized sports and formal recreational program offerings are the focus of active youth and adolescent recreation. High participation rates in an increasing variety of recreational activities and programs, combined with extended sports seasons, requires dedicated facilities capable of meeting community expectations for publicly offered recreational services.



Treadwell Park

Rather than disperse its recreational assets into small

neighborhood sized facilities scattered throughout town, Newtown has developed a recreational service approach of concentrating its recreational resources in large centralized locations. In addition, the town has developed a policy of maximizing available recreational resources by utilizing school playing fields and gymnasiums for activities sponsored by the Newtown Parks and Recreation Department and other community organizations. Newtown's school system has also utilized Parks and Recreation Department playing fields to support school sports programs. Table 12. provides a summary matrix of municipal facilities supporting active recreation.



Lake Lillinonah Town

condition. Several of the elementary school playing fields utilized by the Parks and Recreation Department are reported to be in need of improvements to make them more usable. The Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission has identified the additional recreation facilities required to support the level of recreational activities desired by Newtown residents over the next ten years. These include 7 additional recreation/playing fields. Funding for the development of these seven new playing fields was included in the bond package adopted by town residents to facilitate the purchase of the Fairfield Hills property. In adopting this bond issue, the Town has in effect signaled its intent to continue the policy of concentrating its recreational resources in centralized locations.

Additional Recreation Playing Fields: Newtown's active Parks and Recreation facilities are in good



Hawley School Playscape

Additional Recreational Building Facilities: The Parks and Recreation Department has also identified the need for a recreation center to support the variety of non-playing field recreational

TABLE 12

TOWN OF NEWTOWN
Plan of Conservation and Development- 2002

MATRIX OF TOWN MAINTAINED RECREATION FACILITIES AND SCHOOL FIELDS

Facility Name	Play Equipment	Picnic Area	Tennis Courts	Basketball Court	Baseball Field	Bike Path	Softball Field	Soccer Field	Field Hockey	Lacrosse Field	Football Field	Swimming Pool	Walking Trails	Additional Facilities, Features and Comments
Dickinson Park	1	2	5	1			1					1		volleyball, pavilion
Tranquil Park	2	1	4	1	1		1	2				1		2 soccer/lacrosse fields, 2 pavilions, baseball field by S.H. School, 1 multi-purpose baseball/softball field
Orchard Hill Park/Nature Center													X	Newtown Nature Center, walking trails
Walnut Tree Fields					1			1						baseball field- 90' baselines, soccer field in Fall
Liberty Fields							1	1						baseball field- 60' baselines
Oakview Fields								1		1				1 combination soccer/lacrosse field- nonregulation
Fairfield Hills					3	2	1	2		1				3 youth baseball fields, 2 batting cages
Lake Limonoh		1												boat launch
Sandy Hook Athletic Club					1									1 youth baseball field, batting cage
Hawley School	1			1		2		1		1	1			1 combination field- football / lacrosse / soccer
Sandy Hook School	1				1			1		1				1 small practice soccer/lacrosse field in poor condition
Head OfMeadow School	1						1	2						small soccer field in poor condition
Middle Gate School	1						1							1 small softball field
Middle School					1		1	1						baseball field- 90' baselines, soccer field drains poorly
High School			4		1		1	2	1	2	2	1		Blue and Gold Stadium for high school sports only, combination soccer/lacrosse fields, field hockey field in outfield of baseball field, 1 practice football field, batting cage, all weather track in stadium
TOTALS	7	4	13	3	9	5	8	13	1	6	3	3		

Source: Newtown Parks and Recreation Department
HMA Field Inventory

programs provided to residents on a year round basis. The desired recreation center would include: 2 oversized gyms to allow for two full court games, with lockers, showers and equipment storage; a smaller gym for karate, dancing and aerobic exercise programs; an auditorium; all purpose rooms for music, crafts and toddler programs; an indoor swimming pool; a new teen center; an outdoor skateboard facility; an outdoor basketball court and an outdoor playground. Parks and Recreation has also identified the need for a 10,000 square foot maintenance facility. This facility would provide office space, vehicle maintenance, bathrooms, lockers and showers, outside storage for maintenance materials (clay, soil, etc.) and equipment storage and parking for cars and trucks.

Senior Center

The role of municipal senior citizen centers have changed over the years to keep pace with the changing needs of our aging population. At one time senior centers were predominately social and recreational facilities. While continuing to serve those functions, senior centers have evolved to become a base for the provision of a variety of informational and social services to senior citizens.

The Town's 60 and older population increased by 439 persons between 1990 - 2000, representing a 16.6% increase in this age group and the 55 to 59 age category increased by 40.3% during the same period, indicating a continuation of the growth in Newtown's senior population.



Multi-Purpose Building – Sandy Hook

Newtown's Senior Center is located in the Town's Multi-Purpose Building on Riverside Road in Sandy Hook. The center currently occupies approximately 800 square feet of space. During the Fairfield Hills Master Planning process, the Senior Center identified a need for approximately 2,500 square feet of space. While the need for an expanded Senior Center is generally recognized by the community, no monies have been programmed in the Town's Capital Improvements Program for this use.

Sanitary Sewer System

Public sanitary sewer service is new to Newtown, having been completed since the preparation of the 1993 POD. Newtown's public sewer system was developed in conjunction with a municipal sewer avoidance program. The municipal sewer system was designed to address sewage disposal problems and the Town's sewer avoidance program is designed to eliminate the need to extend the municipal sewer system to serve additional residential areas in the future.

Newtown's municipal sewer system serves the central area of the Town, including most of the Borough and Sandy Hook Center, as described on the attached map. The system's treatment plant was developed jointly with the State of Connecticut and was designed to serve Town needs, the State's Garner Correctional facility and the future use of the abandoned Fairfield Hills hospital complex. The Town will most likely receive additional access to the plant's treatment capacity once the acquisition of Fairfield Hills has been completed. The sewer system contains approximately twenty miles of piping, four pump stations and a treatment facility located at the end of Commerce Road with the capacity to treat 932,000 gallons of sewage daily. Current sewage treatment at the plant averages 500,000 – 600,000 gallons per day. The system was completed in 1997.

The intent of the Town's sewer avoidance policies are to foster the maintenance of existing onsite septic systems outside of the sewer service areas and avoid the need to extend sewer service beyond the current limits of service to serve failed systems.

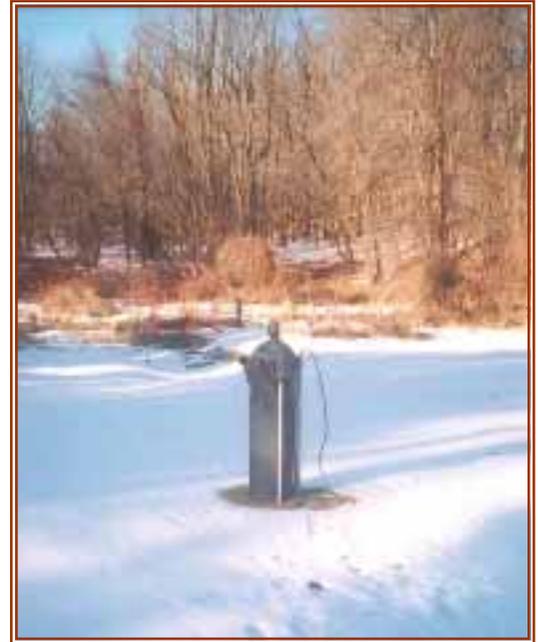
Public sanitary sewer service is also provided within the Route 6 corridor in the Hawleyville area of Town, extending toward the Bethel town line. Sewer service within this area is pumped into the City of Danbury's municipal sewer system and treated at the City's Plumbtrees Road treatment facility, as per an inter-municipal agreement that provides Newtown with the treatment capacity of up to 150,000 gallons of sewage per day. The sewer service provided within the Hawleyville area pursuant to this agreement is intended to primarily serve economic development activities. To date, approximately 30,000 gallons of this capacity has been allocated for two area uses.

Water Service

United Water Connecticut: Most of Newtown's 8,500+ households and 800+ businesses obtain their drinking water from private on-site wells. United Water Connecticut (UWC) is the largest provider of water service in Newtown with 1,153 residential customers and 185 commercial and industrial customers in 2002. In addition, UWC provides fire hydrant services for the Town and the Borough, as well as to private parties. UWC is a private water company regulated by the State of Connecticut.

UWC obtains water supplied to its Newtown customers exclusively from two wells located in the Pootatuck Aquifer. These wells are located in the southern area of Town on the east side of Route 25, just north of the Sand Hill Plaza Shopping Center. Currently, UWC pumps an average of 437,000 gallons per day, with peak pumping demand of around 700,000 gallons per day. UWC's wells have a sustained yield of 1,500,000 gallons per day. Since the preparation of the 1993 POD, the UWC has upgraded its Reservoir Road storage tank capacity from 200,000 gallons to 560,000 gallons. UWC is currently planning on developing a new well in the Pootatuck Aquifer, in the Sandy Hook area of Town and UWC is also considering the possibility of developing additional water resources outside of the Pootatuck Aquifer.

Some of UWC's service expansions since to 1993 POD include the Sandy Hook School, Fire House and Multi-Purpose Building and other Sandy Hook areas. UWC will continue to expand to meet emerging needs. Recent service expansions include providing water service to the Newtown High School and providing service along Route 6 in the Hawleyville area, extending nearly to the Bethel town boundary. Expansion of the UWC system is done at the expense of those desiring service.



United Water Wellhead
Adjacent to the Pootatuck River

Pootatuck River Aquifer: The 26.1 square mile Pootatuck River watershed, which supplies the 7.9 square mile Pootatuck Aquifer, lies mainly within Newtown, with small portions located in the towns of Easton and Monroe. In 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated the Pootatuck Aquifer as a "sole source aquifer," indicating that there are no viable alternative sources of sufficient water supply. In making this determination the U.S. EPA concluded "...the aquifer is capable of yielding approximately 4.0 million gallons per day (mgd). At least half of the amount will be required to maintain stream quality and to support waste assimilation and the cold water fishery. The State of Connecticut's diversion control law would, in all likelihood, prohibit withdrawals in excess of 2 mgd. Current water use is 1,009,406 gallons per day and if projected water supply demand does not increase and drought conditions do not prevail, Newtown should have sufficient water supplies for the next 40 years."

To safeguard the water resources located in the Pootatuck Aquifer, the Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) adopted Aquifer Protection regulations in 1994, that were subsequently updated in 1999. The Conservation Commission has been designated to act as the Town's Aquifer Protection Agency. In 2000, the PZC rezoned land in support of aquifer protection and sewer avoidance. The Town is currently considering making a request to the US Geological Survey (USGS) to update the 1978 USGS study of the Pootatuck Aquifer and further evaluate the affects of ground water withdrawal on aquatic habitat within the sole source Pootatuck Aquifer.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Fire protection and emergency medical services in Newtown are provided on a volunteer basis. Newtown has five volunteer fire departments and one volunteer ambulance organization. These organizations are staffed by approximately 150 area residents who volunteer their time to serve the Town. Volunteers serve in a number of capacities, from fighting fires and rendering emergency medical services to providing training, maintaining equipment, record keeping, etc.

The location of Newtown's volunteer fire departments reflects the fact that Newtown is one of the largest towns in Connecticut and fire protection has evolved over the years to provide coverage to Newtown's central Borough and historic hamlets and neighborhoods, extending coverage to the entire Town. Each volunteer fire department has a defined service area and the Newtown Board of Fire Commissioners functions to coordinate services between the five departments and helps to allocate municipal financial support.

The Newtown Volunteer Ambulance Corp provides emergency medical services for the Town. Operating from a station located on Mt. Pleasant Road (Routes 6 and 25) this organization has nearly 50 volunteers with EMT certification who respond to approximately 1,400 calls a year.

Police Protection

The requirements for municipal police services in Newtown have continually evolved to meet the changing needs of a growing and changing Town during the Newtown Police Departments 31 years of existence. These changes result from the growth of the Town as well as societal changes. At the present time the Newtown Police Department has a staff of approximately 42 sworn officers and thirteen civilian employees. The Department handled 11,349 calls for service during 2001.

The police department is housed in Town Hall South, at the intersection of Routes 25 and 302 and Glover Avenue. In the Department's Five Year Plan released in July of 2001, this facility was termed "generally inadequate and lack(s) the design specifications to meet the operational needs of the force." While the building's location provides good accessibility to the general public and is structurally sound, it lacks adequate space for parking and will continue to require periodic interior and exterior repairs to address problems created by the presence of building materials that are not durable. The Five Year Plan calls for a "comprehensive environmental space needs study for the police department. Architectural drawings of a modified, rehabilitated police department or a new police department which adequately addresses the needs of the department for the next 20 years." Newtown's draft Capital Improvements Plan through the year 2007 has allocated \$200,000 for this space needs analysis.

Library

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library was a gift to the Town of Newtown by Mary Hawley and was opened in 1932. A major expansion of the library nearly doubled floor space and was completed in 1998. In addition to an extensive collection of traditional library resources, the Booth Library also offers connectivity to a variety of "on-line" digital resources and ten computers with internet access available for use by library patrons.

Town Roads

There are 34 miles of state roads in Newtown and 226 miles of local roads whose maintenance is the responsibility of the Town. See the Transportation and Circulation element for a description of transportation issues in Newtown. The Town's extensive road system includes a network of older roads that function as collector roads for Newtown numerous newer subdivisions. This extensive road system will require constant attention to maintain the affected Town roads, bridges and 4,600 catch basins. Twenty-one bridges are programmed for improvement during the next seven to ten years.



Dodgingtown Volunteer Fire

Newtown has an ongoing road maintenance program to address Town roads exhibiting structural base and drainage problems, as well as a program of annual street sealing to postpone future costly repairs, all done within the limits of available funding. Newtown's draft Capital Improvements Plan through the fiscal year 2007 allocates \$2,000,000 annually for a variety of improvements to Newtown's road infrastructure.



Public Works Facility

Solid Waste Disposal

Following the preparation of the 1993 POCD, the Town closed its landfill. As a member of the Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority (HRRA), Newtown hosts a regional transfer station serving Newtown and Brookfield from its Ethan Allen Road facility. The Town owns the land under the transfer station and the transfer station facilities are owned by Wheelabrator Technologies Inc, a wholly owned subsidiary of Waste Management Inc. Town residents can use the transfer station during its normal operating hours by showing proper proof of residency or purchase trash collection services directly from private refuse collection companies.

Solid waste from HRRA member towns is disposed of by Wheelabrator pursuant to a long term agreement between HRRA and Wheelabrator. The Town is obligated to deliver a minimum tonnage of solid waste annually. The current cost to the Town to dispose of solid waste (tipping fee) is \$73 per ton. This system has the capacity to handle solid waste disposal for the next 10 years.

Newtown participates in the HRRA recycling program. The Town operates a recycling center at its Ethan Allen Road facility. The Town includes the cost of recycling collection in its tax base. Residents can also "drop-off" their recyclables at the Town's recycling center.