

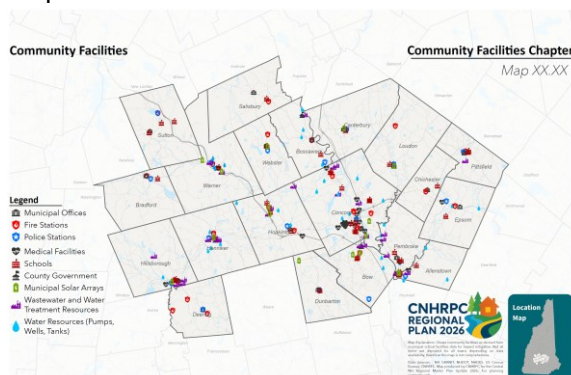


COMMUNITY FACILITIES in Central NH

INTRODUCTION

With 20 communities in the Central NH Region including the City of Concord, a total population of 122,617, a land area of about 750 square miles, 56 miles of interstate highway, 170 miles of beautiful major rivers and countless square miles of lakes and ponds, the **area's municipalities must manage facilities, infrastructure, budgets, and services** while offering **safe and attractive places to live, conduct business, learn, and recreate.**

Connections among housing, population, demographics, transportation, land use, natural resources, economic development and municipal budgets influence the Region and what it has to offer residents. **New and improved community facilities attract people to town.** With population changes, the Region will need to continue its dialogue about how these changes impact facilities and the services provided.



BACKGROUND DATA

Many communities completed **substantial rehabilitations** to municipal facilities or completed new construction facilities since 2015. Continuing improvements to public buildings, including energy efficiency, structural, lighting, parking lots, roofs, safety improvements and security systems were completed in all communities.

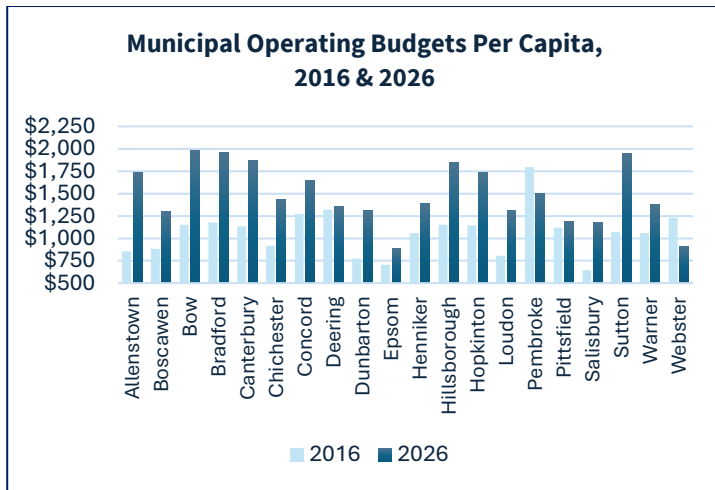
Town	Significant Facility Project	Date
Allenstown	New Community Center	2015-2016
Allenstown	New Community School	2022-2024
Allenstown	Rehabilitating former Elementary School into future Town Hall	2025-2026
Bow	New Public Safety Center	2017
Bradford	Rehabilitated Bradford Town Hall	2015-2024
Dunbarton	Town Hall / Library	2022-2023
Epsom	Rehabilitated Old Town Hall into New Town Offices	2022-2023
Loudon	New Town Office Building	2016-2017
Warner	New Fire & Rescue Station / EOC	2018-2019

Source: Town Reports, Websites

At the same time, **school enrollment** figures by community declined by -1,814 (12%) students between 2014-2026. **Populations are skewing older** today than in 2014, indicating the need for different services.

FACTS TODAY

While each town and city have distinct annual budgets for staffing, facilities, programs, improvements, and maintenance, one way to gauge trends is to compare **municipal operating budgets per capita** over time.



In 2016, the average per capita municipal operating budget spending in the Region was \$1,063, while in 2026 the figure rose to \$1,493. These are spotlight years, with other budget figures in the interim years. The per capita spending varies among communities, yet increases point to **general overall infrastructure and programmatic improvements** in the Central NH Region.

WHAT IS IMPROVING?

1 _ More major municipal facilities projects.

Investment in communities is increasing in the form of new Town Halls and Offices and Fire and Rescue buildings. This is attractive to residents and businesses.

2 _ More Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs).

Most communities now have active CIPs which are updated every few years. Along with those CIPs are the

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

use of Capital Reserve Funds as tools to save for the needed improvements. These CIPs are often now produced internally.

3 _ More climate resiliency (for weather events).

The severe weather events over the last 20 years have enabled better collaboration between communities and utility companies. Upgraded culverts and drainage, maintenance of problem roads and trees, higher Highway Department budgets, and practiced response allow for better preparation to higher intensity flooding, wind, and winter events.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO WORK ON?

- ☐ **Continued investment in communities.** Consider an increase in the per capita spending for municipal services and facilities improvement. Adjust services and programs to accommodate changing populations.
- ☐ **More renewable energy sources.** Consider promotion of solar, wind, and hydroelectric alternatives to enable consumers a choice for electric services. Install municipal solar arrays for long term gain.
- ☐ **More attention on water and sewer projects.** Consider drinking water as a precious resource and further protect its quality and quantity. Invest in water and sewer projects to enhance communities and attract appropriate development.
- ☐ **What does declining school enrollment and an aging population mean?** Consider options for local schools and municipal services, and opening community-wide dialogues about goals.