

10.0 PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Public facilities and services are the most tangible representation of any local government, and are arguably the most important. Respondents to the Holden Master Plan survey agree, with 99% saying that local services are important or very important to their quality of life, and 96% feeling similarly about local facilities. This chapter summarizes the current state of Holden's public facilities and services. Improvements that may be required as the Town continues to grow and evolve are also noted. Existing assets will need to be adapted to changes in technology and to meet the needs of future residents and economic development. The recommendations issued at the end of this chapter will support achievement of five primary goals:

- Ensure public facilities meet the needs of Holden's population.
- Maintain long-term funding mechanisms to provide for future public facility needs.
- Improve the sustainability and resilience of Town operations.
- Deliver infrastructure that meets existing and future Town needs.

- Uphold the high quality of Holden's educational system and facilities.

As detailed in the following sections, Holden facilities are generally adequate or better in function, scope, condition, and efficiency for a community of Holden's current size and budget, and residents' strong desire for quality services. Several major capital projects have been completed or approved to address deficiencies identified in the 2008 Master Plan. Challenges remain at other facilities, including Chaffins Fire Substation (Fire Station No. 2) and the Town's two administrative offices (the historic Town Hall and Starbard Building). Holden's Town-owned public works infrastructure faces a number of challenges from recent steady growth; however, it is also generally in good condition, with adequate capacity to support moderate residential and commercial expansion. Staffing levels appear to be generally sufficient; however, staffing for the Fire Department, Municipal Light Department, and other departments should be evaluated for current and future needs.

PRIOR PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Holden Master Plan (2008)

The Town of Holden 2008 Master Plan provides an outline of existing conditions, issues, and recommendations for Public Facilities and Services. The major recommendations identified in the Master Plan (2008) regarding facilities and services include:

- Develop a priority capital improvement plan for new, expanded, or upgraded public facility needs for Holden over the next 10 to 15 years.
- Establish long-term funding mechanisms to provide a funding base for future public facility needs.
- Establish a Prioritization and Funding Plan for municipal facilities.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate committed reserved wastewater flow, evaluating capacity deficits and surpluses.
- Provide young people with a place to go with appropriate and popular activities for after-school hours.
- Provide services for the increasing senior population as well as the new “kind” of senior emerging as the baby boomers “come of age,” which may require new kinds of services and activities at the Senior Center.
- Confirm and update population projections and demand projections over time to confirm adequacy of water supply system, recognizing that water usage is adequate for the foreseeable future but is not under Town control.
- Establish a Capital Planning Committee.
- Replace the DPW Garage and Fire Department sub-station.

Town of Holden Town and School Buildings Assessments

The Town of Holden Town and School Building Assessments report was completed by Gienapp Design Architecture on October 3, 2018 (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018). Gienapp’s team conducted site visits and interviewed department heads to identify facility needs. The study identified deficiencies and future needs, estimated project costs, and assigned priorities to each project. The report findings informed many of the recommendations included in this chapter.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing conditions assessments offered below were based on interviews with Town staff, other information provided by the Town, and review of the draft Town of Holden Town and School Buildings Assessments report (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018).

History and Overview

In the late 1990s, Holden faced a growing number of facility-related problems that endangered the Town’s ability to provide effective services to residents. Its schools were aging, its public safety facilities were deteriorating, its water and sewer systems were thought to be near capacity, and it lacked adequate facilities for youth and seniors. Holden’s residents and Town government responded with a burst of public building projects over the next decade-plus:

- A new Mayo Elementary School (1998)
- A new Davis Hill Elementary School and a renovated Dawson Elementary School (both 2000)
- A new Senior Center and Municipal Light Department building (both 2001)
- An upgraded Dawson Recreation Area (2003)
- An expanded and renovated Wachusett Regional High School (2009)

- A new Public Safety Complex (2010)
- A converted Recreation Department office and fitness studio (2014)
- A new Mountview Middle School (2016)
- Approval of a new Public Works headquarters (2018, to be completed ca. 2020)
- Various upgrades and expansions of public utilities throughout the period

This extended run of projects successfully addressed many of the most urgent problems facing the Town's capital assets and related services. Exceptions include the aging and deteriorating Town Hall and Starbard Building, where local administrative functions are based, and the inadequate Chaffins fire substation (Holden Fire Station No. 2) on Adams Road, which will soon lose its co-tenant when the DPW barn relocates to its new facility on Industrial Drive. The need to maintain and replace building systems (HVAC, roofs, fire protection, etc.) reaching their designed lifetimes or due to code changes at the many facilities completed between 1998 and 2003 presents another challenge for the next several years. Map 10 - 1 depicts the major public facilities in Town.

Governance, Staffing, and Civic Engagement

Planning and Budgeting

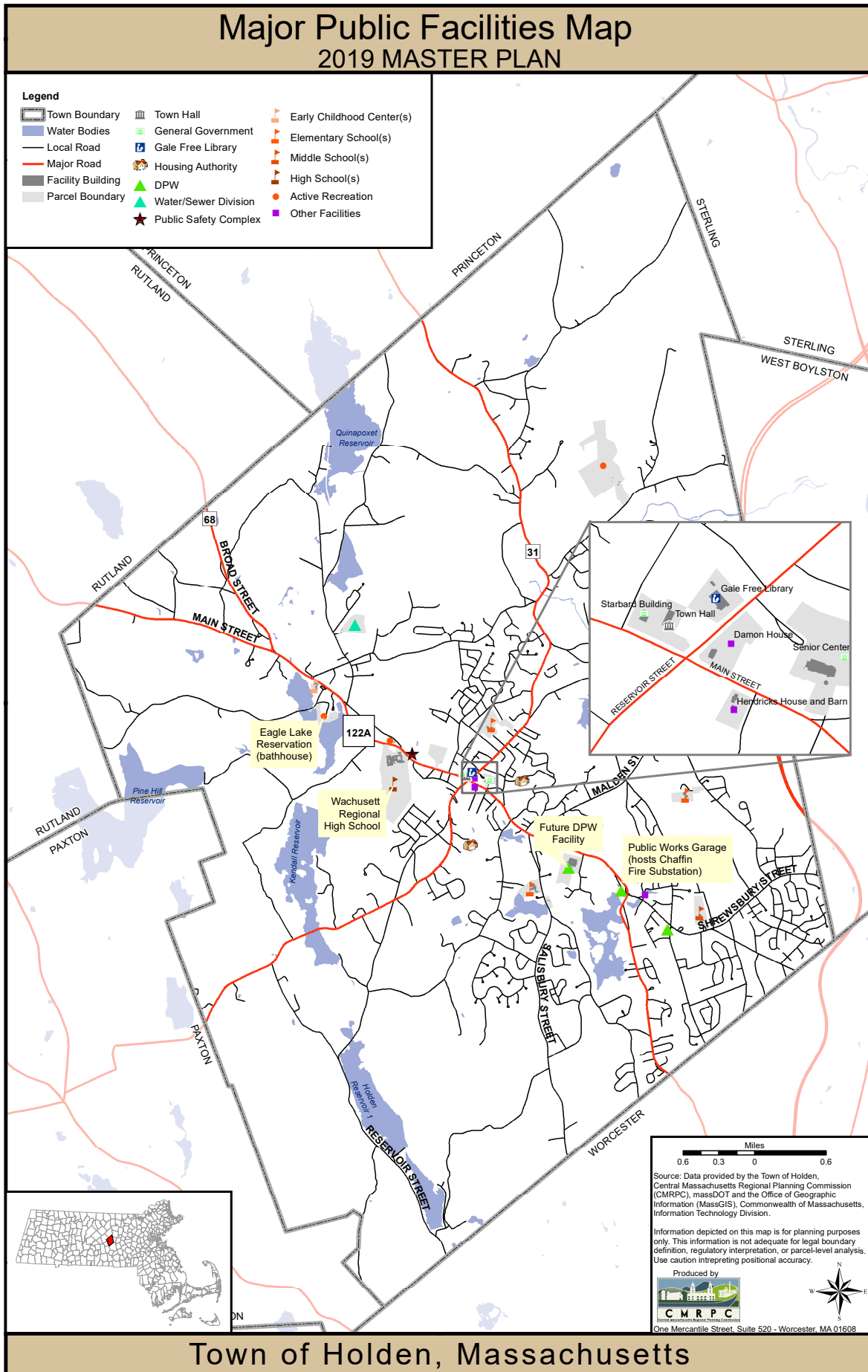
Planning and budgeting for capital projects, ranging from Town buildings and vehicles to parks and some public works improvements, is overseen by the Town Manager's office. Each fall, all Town departments complete a five-year capital needs assessment and submit requests for priority items to be included in the annual capital budget. Requests are reviewed by the Town Manager's office. The capital budget is then subject to the normal budget review process, including review by the Finance Committee and approval by voters at Holden's Annual Town Meeting.

Boards, Committees, and Commissions

To oversee its staffed departments and facilities, Holden operates more than 30 elected and appointed boards, committees, and commissions. This number is roughly average for the area. Rutland has approximately 15 such entities; West Boylston has more than forty; Paxton has approximately 20; and Princeton has just under 30. Based on responses to the Master Plan survey, residents are familiar with a few of the more prominent governing and advisory bodies such as the Board of Selectmen, but they lack understanding of some that are more narrowly focused. The Cultural Council, Infrastructure Investment Fund, Cable Advisory Committee, and Veterans Advisory Committee are the least well understood. The Town's elected and appointed boards, committees, and commissions are summarized in Table 10 - 1.

Governance and Administration

Holden's executive branch is the Board of Selectmen, composed of five elected members who serve as the main policymakers for the local government and for overseeing local services. Represented since the 1950s by a professional Town Manager in most day-to-day matters, the Selectmen are ultimately responsible for making and implementing Town policies, for appointing members to several unelected boards and commissions, and for executing certain contracts, among many other tasks. The Selectmen also serve as the Light Commission and Water & Sewer Commission. Other elected boards such as the Library Trustees and Wachusett Regional School District Committee are charged with setting and/or regulating specific policies per state statute or local by-law independent of the Board of Selectmen. The appointed boards often (but not always) serve in more advisory roles; several boards are appointed by the Town Manager rather than by the Selectmen. The annual Town Meeting each spring (as supplemented by any special meetings) serves as Holden's legislative branch.



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Table 10 - 1: Holden Boards, Committees, and Commissions (Town of Holden, 2019)

Name	#	Elected or Appointed	Core Purpose(s)
250th Permanent Gift Committee	4	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Oversees seasonal concerts and other events at bandstand
Agricultural Commission	7	Appointed (by Selectmen)	Advises other boards and commissions on projects, policies and acquisitions related to agriculture; promotes farm businesses and events
Board of Assessors/Fence Viewers	3	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Responsible for listing and valuation of personal and real property; certifies property tax rate
Board of Health	3	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Regulates food safety, septic systems, and other health topics; conducts various public health activities; some functions regionalized through Central Mass. Regional Public Health Alliance
Board of Registrars of Voters	3	Appointed (by Selectmen)	Maintains the voter registration database and annual street listing
Board of Selectmen, Light, and Water/Sewer Commissioners	5	Elected	Executive branch of the Town government; appoints many other officials; represented in day-to-day activities by Town Manager; serves as Light and Water/Sewer Commission(s)
Cable Advisory Committee	6	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Provides oversight of operations and policies at the local access cable TV station (HCTV)
Community Garden Committee	4	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Leads effort to develop community gardens for residents to purchase plots
Conservation Commission	7	Appointed (by Town Manager with Selectmen approval)	Regulates protection of natural resources with particular emphasis on wetlands and other open spaces
Council on Aging/Senior Citizens Committee	7	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Advocates and provides services for local seniors; provides oversight of operations and policy at the Senior Center
Cultural Council	7	Appointed (by Selectmen)	Promotes access to education, diversity and appreciation of arts, humanities and sciences; distributes grants from Mass. Cultural Coalition
DPW Facilities Committee	7	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Temporary study committee; selects site and develops plan for new DPW headquarters
Eagle Lake Committee	7	Appointed (by Selectmen)	Studies recreational opportunities at the lake and reviews funding options for improvements; develops plan for ownership and maintenance of dam
Education Options Review Committee	7	Appointed (by Selectmen)	Reviews options to enhance school performance in a cost-effective fashion
Finance Committee	9	Appointed (by Moderator)	Arm of Town Meeting; reviews Town expenses and borrowing; makes recommendations to Town Meetings and to boards and commissions
Help at H.O.M.E.	6	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Oversees fundraising and disbursement of charitable funds from the Welcome Aldrich Relief Fund for at-need residents

Table 10 - 1 Continued

Name	#	Elected or Appointed	Core Purpose(s)
Historic District Commission	7	Appointed (by Selectmen)	Promotes preservation of historic assets in the Holden Center and Boyden Road historic districts; reviews construction and maintenance in these areas
Historical Commission	5	Appointed (by Town Manager with Selectmen approval)	Promotes historic preservation through planning and education; inventories local historic assets
Housing Authority	5	Elected	One member is appointed by the Governor; oversees State-owned public housing and federal voucher programs in Holden; assisted in day-to-day operations by Housing Authority's Executive Director (position is currently outsourced to Worcester Housing Authority)
Infrastructure Investment Fund	6	Appointed (by Moderator)	Oversees investments of the special Fund in capital projects
Memorial Day Parade Committee	5	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Plans and oversees the annual Memorial Day parade; raises funds for parade operations
Montachusett Regional Vocational/ Technical School District (Monty Tech)	1	Appointed (by Moderator and Selectmen)	1 of 22 regional members; advises Monty Tech operations, policies and procedures
Municipal Electric Power Advisory Board	7	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Oversees operations, staffing and infrastructure of the Holden Municipal Light Department
Planning Board	7	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Regulates land use; reviews site plans and subdivision requests; periodically reviews zoning and oversees long-range plans including master plan
Recreation Committee	5	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Advises Recreation Director on programming and policies; sponsors annual Christmas celebration
Trustees of Gale Free Library	6	Elected	Governing body of the Gale Free Library
Veterans Advisory Committee	7	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Advises Town Manager on veterans-related matters
Wachusett Regional School District Committee	11	Elected	Oversees regional school policies and budgeting. Holden elects 11 of 22 total members.
Water/Sewer Advisory Board	3	Appointed (by Town Manager)	Oversees operations, staffing and infrastructure of DPW water and sewer services
Zoning Board of Appeals	5	Appointed (by Selectmen)	5 members, 2 alternates. Hears appeals on building permits and discretionary zoning-related permits, including special permits and variances

Staffing

Holden's residents are served by more than 140 regular Town employees as well as seasonal workers in several departments. A breakdown of full-time personnel by department is provided in Table 10 - 2.

Table 10 - 2: Employees by Town Department
(Town of Holden, 2019)

Department/ Position	Posted Office Hours Week	Staffing Level
Police	40; on-call	34
Public Works	39	34
Municipal Light	41.5	20
Fire/EMS	40; on-call	20 (+ call FFs)
Gale Free Library	52 to 55 (seasonal)	7
Town Manager	39	4
Treasurer/Collector	39	4
Planning & Development	39	4
Recreation	40	3
Town Clerk	39	3
Information Technology	39	3
Senior Services/ Council on Aging	40	3
Assessing	39	2
Accounting	39	1
Veterans' Agent	By appointment	1
Health	16	1 (CMRPHA)
Community Television (HCTV)	40	1

General Government Buildings Town Hall

Constructed in the early 1800s and rebuilt in the 1870s, Holden's historic Town Hall has been upgraded and expanded multiple times in the decades since. It remains an important civic facility that hosts several departments including Building, Health, Planning, the Town Clerk, and a portion of the Public Works staff. While the 11,000 sq. ft. building (with 7,000 sq. ft. of occupiable space) is an iconic community landmark, it has a number of deficiencies that reduce its effectiveness for modern municipal operations. The recent Gienapp Design building assessment highlighted various concerns ranging from mild (repairs to doors and the elevator wall) to fairly substantial (aspects of the HVAC system as well as basement drainage and moisture management). According to Town staff, the Town Hall also has less-than-ideal office, storage and meeting space. Depending on costs, upgrades to these items could trigger the requirement for expensive renovations to meet current handicapped access, fire protection, and other codes. (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018)



Starbard Building

Together with the Town Hall, the Starbard Building (built in 1797) serves as the administrative home of the local government. The Town Manager's office and financial departments including the Treasurer/Collector, Assessor, and Accountant are housed here. As with the Town Hall, a number of maintenance issues are present, including plumbing, ventilation, and various code issues. Of particular concern to the Gienapp Design team was the poor condition of some structural components. (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018) Structural shoring was recommended to support the building. More office and storage space would be appreciated by the Town staff housed in the building.

Senior Center

Constructed in 2001, the Senior Center is one of Holden's more modern public facilities. At the Center, the Council on Aging (COA) provides services including cultural and educational programming, on-site meals, socializing, exercise and recreational activities, various social services, and transportation. The Center is open five days a

week. Aside from services offered at the Center itself, the COA offers an outreach program and coordinates the local Meals on Wheels Program.¹ Activity at the Center has been stable or increasing slightly, with unduplicated yearly elderly clients generally in the 1,250 to 1,350 range, as well as 90 to 100 additional non-elderly users. Capacity is generally adequate, but staff expressed concerns that it may become an issue as the "Boomer" generation ages in the next several years. The building is in excellent condition; however, as systems begin to reach their designed lifespans in the next few years, repairs will be required. A portion of the roof is set to be replaced in 2019. The building is energy efficient and is equipped with solar panels. The Center has three full-time staff, four part-time van drivers, and three part-time office staff. It operates two vans, one of which is owned by the Town for in-Holden trips, and one of which is owned by the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. The Senior Center serves as a warming/cooling shelter for Holden residents during extreme temperature events.



Starbard Building (CMRPC Staff, 2019)

¹ The Meals on Wheels (MOW) program delivers lunch to homebound seniors who are unable to provide their own meals, and who meet certain guidelines. Special dietary considerations are available for those with chronic health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. This daily check in by a volunteer driver may be the only social contact an elder has and helps reduce the isolation often experienced by disabled seniors. Drivers are trained to identify and report observations or emergencies that might indicate a medical problem or the need for more intervention.



Gale Free Library (CMRPC Staff, 2019)

Gale Free Library

This impressive 1888 landmark was substantially expanded and renovated in 1989. The staff is generally pleased with the facility, and based on Master Plan survey results it is perhaps the most-visited and most-loved of all Town buildings. The library is open 52 to 55 hours per week (variable by season), including expanded nighttime hours, and is staffed by seven full-time equivalent employees. Staffing is considered adequate for now but as the town grows and evening hours foster greater numbers of visitors, additional staff may be required. Programming includes regular story hours, movie nights, crafts, and a popular summer reading program. In 2017, library circulation approached 229,000 and most days saw 500 to 700 visitors. Program participants totaled about 8,600 including 7,000 youth participants.

The library is generally considered to be in good condition, but as with any building its age, there are improvements that could be made. For instance, the

Gienapp Design study recommends replacement of aging components of the HVAC system, and library staff would like the rooftop appliances to be raised to reduce noise. (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018) Additional needs highlighted by the library staff range from upgrades to computers and software to potential conversion of some shelf space (no longer needed due to the increasingly digital collection) to a small tutoring or meeting space. Maintenance of the window frames is also required but historic preservation considerations add expense and difficulty to the project, so it has been deferred. The Town's Information Technology (IT) department upgraded wireless internet connectivity at the library in 2017 for open use by visitors. Past concerns about inadequate parking and large meeting room space are no longer applicable – neither frequently exceeds its capacity. The library is governed by the Trustees of the Damon Memorial Library.

Public Safety Complex (CMRPC, 2019)



Safety and Emergency Services and Facilities

Public Safety Complex

The Police-Fire-Emergency Management Services (EMS) facility was built in 2009 to 2010 and serves as Holden's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The 43,000 sq. ft. building is considered very suitable for its purposes and it is expected to be more than adequate for another 40 years. The two-level facility has separate parking bays for Fire/EMS and for Police vehicles, and is equipped with holding cells. Relatively new, no major maintenance issues have been encountered at the complex as of 2019. In collaboration with the Municipal Light Department, the Police and Fire Departments are investigating solar generating options. The building is heated with a geothermal system. Additional storage is available at the adjacent Fire Station Annex.

In 2019, the Fire Department was staffed with 16 full-time firefighters and 22 call firefighters as well as a Chief and Deputy Chief. All are trained to the paramedic level. According to department leaders, in years prior to 2019, it was a challenge to recruit younger firefighters, and call firefighters are not as available as in the past due to regular jobs outside of Holden and the greater Worcester region. Additional full-time firefighters are now being recruited through funds from a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant. Fire/EMS call volume has been increasing, especially for EMS services. Overall, more than 2,100 calls were received in 2017, of which 1,536 were EMS calls. An increase in EMS calls of roughly 10% over the previous five years is suspected to be linked to the aging population and an increase in senior housing. The vehicle fleet includes four ambulances (one of which is a spare), four fire engines, one tower truck, one forestry truck, two command vehicles, and one shift supervisor vehicle (a small SUV). Ambulances are replaced on a three-year cycle. The tower truck and one fire engine are set to be replaced in the next few years.

While most of the developed part of Holden is covered by the municipal water system and its hydrants, some outlying areas rely on alternative water sources for firefighting such as a dry hydrant on South Road or cisterns at some subdivisions. Mutual aid from Fire District No. 8 is generally called in to assist with rural fires. Holden was classified as a 04/4X community in its 2017 ISO Public Protection Classification report, indicating a relatively high level of protection despite the limitations of water service coverage in town. (ISO, 2017) This classification, based on training, facilities, water supply and other factors, is often used by insurance companies to set rates for property owners in a community.

The Holden Police Department is staffed with 17 officers, nine dispatchers, four sergeants and lieutenants, two administrative support staff, the Chief, and an animal control officer. The vehicle fleet is updated with two new cruisers purchased each year through the capital budget. The Police Department handles dispatch for all Town emergency services as well as those from the Towns of Princeton and West Boylston through a regional services agreement. Additional mutual aid for law enforcement is available through the Central Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (CEMLEC). Holden continues to be among the safest communities in Worcester County and Massachusetts overall in terms of violent crime, with an incident rate of 52 per 100,000 residents in 2017, compared to a statewide rate of 353.

Chaffins Fire Substation (Fire Station No. 2)

In addition to its base at the Public Safety Complex, the Fire Department maintains a satellite station at the Department of Public Works' Adams Road garage. Presently the substation is unmanned due to insufficient staffing. Starting in July 2019, the station will be staffed during daytime hours. It houses two engines and in July 2019 will add an ambulance. The substation is considered unsuitable for modern use for a variety of reasons. Of particular concern is the roof – the Gienapp Design study highlighted significant structural concerns. (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018) However, the location is ideal for quick response times to the

southern part of town. The Fire Department would like to keep a presence in the area even after the DPW services provided on the same site are moved to Industrial Drive.

Public Schools

Holden is one of five participant communities in the Wachusett Regional School District (WRSD), along with Paxton, Princeton, Rutland and Sterling. As part of the WRSD agreement, each community is responsible for capital projects costing \$35,000 or more at schools serving local children only. In Holden, the four schools that serve primarily local students include Mountview Middle School (grades 6 to 8) and the three elementary schools (Kindergarten to Grade 5). Costs for capital projects at the regional high school and early childhood center are shared among the five-town region. The student/teacher ratio in the WRSD is 15.5/1, compared to 13.1/1 for all Massachusetts schools. The District employs approximately 460 teachers (FTE) and 640 other staff.

Enrollment

Enrollment in the district has fluctuated within a fairly narrow range in the past decade, declining slightly from 7,258 students in 2008 to 7,147 in 2018. Over the ten-year period, enrollment was as high as 7,490 (2011). The Massachusetts School Choice program allows parents to send their children to schools in communities other than the city or town in which they reside. Tuition is paid by the sending district to the receiving district. Districts may elect not to enroll school choice students if no space is available. "School Choice" students from outside the WRSD peaked at 250 in 2012. WRSD no longer accepts new "School Choice" students in order to preserve capacity for children from District towns. Holden is currently the fastest-growing community in the district. As such, the WRSD expects enrollment pressure to continue rising in the Holden-only schools despite the overall recent decline. Holden students currently represent 46.5% of all students in the district and 44.6% of students at the regional high school. According to WRSD estimates, Holden children will likely represent 50% of district students in the next few years. Approximately 91% of Holden children

attend WRSD schools. The remaining students are home-schooled or attend private schools.

Performance

Academic performance indicators for the District are strong. For all grades combined, WRSD students meet or exceed 2018 next-generation Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) standards in English Language Arts at a 67% rate and Math at 64%, compared to 51% and 48% respectively statewide (See Table 10-3). These scores generally compare favorably to neighboring districts using the same test. (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018) One current focus for the district is on social and emotional development. For example, additional school counselors have been added at the middle schools.

Classroom capacity is an increasing concern. The new Mountview Middle School, completed in 2016 to replace a school built for 600 students, is already at or near its design capacity of 800. The Wachusett Regional School Committee recently proposed to provide universal full-day kindergarten in Holden’s three elementary schools. The District’s other primary schools (and the vast majority of schools around the state) already offer this option. Initial WRSD analysis indicates that a new school would have to be built to add sufficient long-term capacity for universal full-day kindergarten. One scenario involves building a new grade 5 to 6 school, shifting the three existing K-5 schools to K-4, and converting the middle school from grades 6 to 8 to grades 7 to 8. As an interim solution, additional classroom space would be added internally at the Mayo Elementary School to allow for all-day kindergarten there.

Table 10 - 3: MCAS Scores by District (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018)

Subject	Leicester	Leominster	Nashoba	Quabbin RSD	Spencer-EB RSD	Wachusett RSD	West Boylston	Worcester	Statewide
English Lang. Arts	36	43	73	44	41	67	57	35	51
Math	35	46	72	45	36	64	57	29	48

School Specific Issues

Wachusett Regional High School (WRHS)

Built in 1952 and renovated and expanded in 2009, the high school is owned by the WRSD and capital projects are funded by the District. WRHS is generally in good condition. Some systems including HVAC are aging and will require replacement in the short- or medium-term. There are relatively minor Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access concerns, primarily with doorways.

Condition and Capacity

WRSD schools serving Holden students are generally in good condition. All have been built, expanded, and/or extensively renovated since the late 1990s. This clustering of school construction in a relatively short period will present a challenge to administrators of future decades, when multiple buildings may require near-simultaneous replacement. In the short term, Holden’s students enjoy fine facilities. System lifecycle upgrades are expected to be the primary capital needs at existing schools.

Mountview Middle School

Built in 2016, Mountview Middle is in excellent condition. There have been some challenges in adjusting to the level of environmental control technology in the building’s operational systems, especially the humidity-control system; however, the building is generally efficient and effective. Capacity is already a concern as Holden enrollments continue to grow along with the Town’s population. The facility serves as Holden’s primary emergency shelter.

Mountview Middle School (CMRPC, 2019)



Dawson Elementary School

Built in the late 1950s and renovated in 2000, Dawson Elementary is in good condition overall; however, a number of building systems require replacement in the short- or medium-term and some other maintenance is needed to fully meet various current code requirements. Additional restrooms are desirable as well.

Davis Hill Elementary School

Built in 2000, the Davis Hill Elementary is in good condition overall. Some building systems require replacement in the short- or medium-term and some other maintenance is needed to fully meet current code requirements. Ice dams on the roof are a recurrent problem in severe winter weather. According to Gienapp Design's study, there are also concerns with drainage and water pressure (Gienapp Design Architecture, 2018).

Mayo Elementary School

Built in 1998, the Mayo Elementary is in good condition overall, but some building systems require replacement in the short- or medium-term and some other maintenance is needed to fully meet current code requirements. There is a drainage problem in the elevator shaft, likely related to post-construction foundation settling.

Wachusett Regional School District Office/Early Childhood Center

Built as the Jefferson Elementary School in the early 1900s with renovations and additions in the 1940s and limited renovations around 2000, this facility is owned by the WRSD and includes both the District office and classroom space for pre-kindergarten students, most of whom are part-time. The building is in fair condition at best, with some portions of the building not substantially updated since the 1940s. There are a variety of building systems and other issues that should be addressed in the next several years.

Highway Garage (CMRPC Staff, 2019)



Public Works Facilities

Highway Garage

The current highway garage was built in the early 1960s and includes a later addition. It is considered by staff to be wholly inadequate for contemporary operations. Parking and service bays at the facility are insufficient. The structure has integrity issues and the building is ADA noncompliant. Space is inadequate for current operations, staff, and vehicles. This facility is to be replaced with a planned \$18 million facility on Industrial Drive within two to three years (construction funding was approved at Holden's 2018 Fall Town Meeting). The Chaffin Fire Station is part of the same facility. Plans for future use of the current facility after the relocation of operations to Industrial Drive are undetermined as of 2019.

Water/Sewer Division

The Water/Sewer Division operates a 2,500 sq. ft. facility on Spring Street. Built in 1950s, it has three maintenance bays for the Division's nine vehicles. Consequently, most vehicles are parked outside. As with the Highway Garage, this facility will be replaced and its operations housed at the new \$18 million facility on Industrial Drive within 2 to 3 years. Plans for future use of the current facility after the

opening of the Industrial Drive building are to be determined.

Municipal Light Department Office

Built in 2001, the Holden Municipal Light Department (HMLD) building is located on the former Chaffin School site. This large facility (approx. 15,000 sq. ft.) has a garage area and a two-level office area. It is equipped with an elevator and other ADA access features. The building is generally in excellent condition but some systems such as the boiler and hot water heater are approaching the end of their designed lifespans and will need replacement in the next few years. The HMLD office serves as Holden's backup Emergency Operations Center.

Housing Authority

The Holden Housing Authority is a state-funded entity separate from the Town government. It operates 56 subsidized apartments for local residents who meet income eligibility guidelines. The Checkerberry Village complex was built in the late 1970s and features 48 units for elderly or disabled residents. The *Commons at Holden* on Towle Drive, which consist of townhouses built in the 1990s, are home to eight families. The waiting lists for potential tenants are lengthy and reflect

the high demand for affordable housing in Town, with nearly 200 names on the list for Checkerberry Village and 100 waiting for The Commons at Holden. The Housing Authority also administers 59 federal Section 8 rental assistance vouchers and has seen a 50% increase in demand for vouchers in the past few years. In late 2018, the HHA entered a five-year contract with the Worcester Housing Authority for management assistance. The Housing Authority is governed by an elected board that includes one member appointed by the Governor.

Recreational Facilities

This discussion excludes conservation land and other unimproved or passive recreational sites that lack capital assets including buildings. Recreational considerations are discussed separately under the Open Space and Recreation chapter.

Recreation Department Office

Built in 1978 as Holden's police headquarters, the Recreation Department assumed ownership of this facility following relocation of the Police Department to the Public Safety Complex. The building was renovated in 2014 to include office space and a fitness studio for various recreational classes. While the facility is generally in good condition, there are ADA access limitations (the restroom and interior vertical access) and the plumbing system is in need of repairs. The facility is shared with the Town's Information Technology department. The Recreation Department has three full-time staff and one vehicle.

Trout Brook Reservation & Lodge

This 660-acre conservation property has a pavilion and a rentable lodge facility in addition to hiking trails. The lodge, considered to be in good condition, includes restrooms, a limited kitchen and a dining area. Some systems such as the water heater and furnace will need replacement in the next few years.

Eagle Lake Reservation

Eagle Lake was formed in 1798 following construction of a mill dam. A portion of the lake front is operated by the Town as a recreational area including a beach and basketball and volleyball facilities. A small bathhouse has supported

swimming opportunities, but it has not been opened in recent years due to lack of demand. Maintenance of the current dam is complicated by its ownership, which includes multiple private entities. In recent years, the dam has deteriorated and at least one owner has proposed to remove or decommission the dam. The Town has formed a committee to investigate solutions to the dam question in order to preserve the recreational use of the lake.

Dawson Recreation Area & Swimming Pool

The Dawson Recreation Area is Holden's primary active recreation site, offering two outdoor swimming pools, a bathhouse, multiple ballfields, basketball courts, picnic areas, a paddleball court, an arts and crafts room, and tennis courts. The facilities are generally in good to excellent condition. Planned projects include resurfacing of the tennis and basketball courts, updates to the playground (which dates to 2004, the original construction date of the complex), and the addition of a pickleball court. Upgrades to plumbing and pool heating may also be necessary in the next several years.

Bandstand & Ballfield (near Senior Center)

Maintained by the building and grounds section of Public Works, these facilities host sports and arts programming in the center of Town. The bandstand, built in 1992, is in good condition. Programming is overseen by the Bandstand Committee.

Other Facilities

Hendricks House

Built in 1890, the Historic Hendricks House was purchased for preservation by the Town in 1975. The landmark building is now managed by the Holden Historical Society as an office, event space, and model for preservation best practices. While the building is generally in good condition, it is not handicapped accessible, and some plumbing improvements are needed.

Damon House

The Damon House was built in 1850 and is Town-owned. It is rented by a law firm that subleases to other tenants, including the Wachusett Area Chamber of Commerce. The building is not ADA accessible.

Grove Cemetery

Grove Cemetery is Holden's active public cemetery. It is maintained by the buildings and grounds section of the Department of Public Works.

Infrastructure Water Supply System

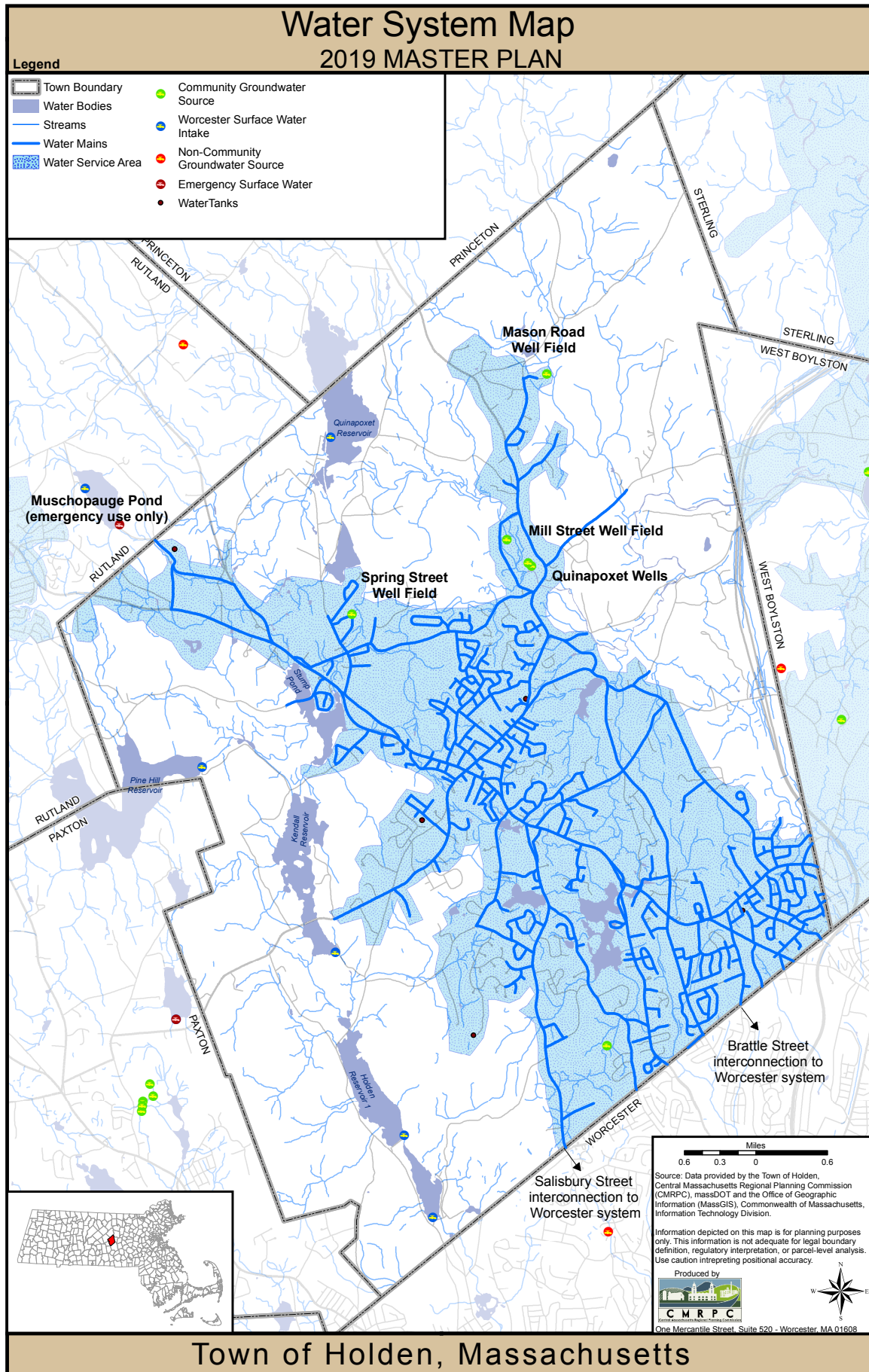
Holden's municipal water supply dates to around 1905, with a number of major extensions built through the early 2000s. The supply is sourced from four wellfields in Town and two interconnections to Worcester's water supply, much of which is originally sourced in Holden. Water from Holden's wells is treated for pH and with fluoride. More than 108 miles of water mains cover around half of the Town's area and serve a large majority of residents and businesses in Holden. In the past decade, average daily demand has ranged from 1.149 million gallons per day (MGD, in 2009) to 1.359 MGD (2013), with the most recent yearly data (2017) at 1.295 MGD. Peak demand has ranged from 2.196 MGD (2008) to 2.86 MGD (during the dry year of 2016), with a 2017 peak of 2.403 MGD. In 2017, approximately 71% of water used in Holden was

sourced from Holden wells. The total capacity of the water system over an extended period is roughly 4.1 MGD, of which 3 MGD would come from the Worcester interconnections. Peak rated capacity for short-term needs is around 4.5 MGD. Adequate capacity therefore exists to support moderate future growth in the customer base. The level of growth outlined in the Buildout Analysis (Appendix C) and Fiscal Impact Analysis (Appendix C), which suggest that much of Holden's remaining developable land is outside the existing water service area, should be manageable over the next two decades. While the water system in general is in good shape, there is interest in replacing all remaining asbestos cement mains and in reducing the "daisy chain" of boosting stations and mains that accompany some new subdivisions. The water system is funded by ratepayers through an enterprise fund. A GIS mapping effort of the water system was recently completed (see Map 10 – 2). In order to comply with the state Water Management Act, Holden issues a daytime water use restriction each summer.



C.L. Hendricks House (CMRPC Staff, 2019)

Map 10 - 2: Water System



Wastewater System

The Town of Holden operates a network of roughly 80 miles of sanitary sewer mains and 29 pump stations serving an area from Jefferson through Holden Center to the Worcester line. Four additional pump stations are operated by private parties. Waste collected is sent via two state-owned interceptor lines through Worcester to the Upper Blackstone Wastewater Pollution Abatement District (UBWPAD) treatment plant in Millbury. The collection system dates to the 1930s and has been expanded a number of times. In the past decade, sewer flows from Holden have averaged around 401 million gallons yearly, ranging from 347.7 million gallons (2012) to 496 million gallons (2017). As of 2020, Holden's allocation of UBWPAD's treatment capacity will be raised to 1.69 MGD (or approx. 617 million gallons annually) per the District's Sewer Use Agreement. Some capacity for future user growth is therefore available. A recent study completed for the Town by engineers at Weston & Sampson estimated around 170,000 gallons in additional daily sewer use (or 62 million gallons annually) can be expected from long-term development of buildable lots within the existing sewer service area. The DPW is currently working with Weston and Sampson on a town-wide sewer analysis to determine where expansions to the sewer system can be accommodated as additional development continues. As with the water system, there is interest in replacing existing asbestos cement sewer mains and in reducing or at least maintaining the number of interconnected mains and pumps related to new subdivisions. The sewer system is funded by ratepayers through an enterprise fund. The wastewater system is shown in Map 10 – 3.

Stormwater Drainage

Stormwater management is an increasing concern for the DPW as the extent of development in Town expands and the intensity of storms is projected to increase due to climate change. Much of Holden, including many rural or lightly developed areas, is served by "country drainage" rather than by purpose-built drainage infrastructure such as storm drains and drain pipes. Access to private properties by easement or other means to retrofit drainage infrastructure where needed is

a considerable obstacle to future improvements. Another consideration is compliance with EPA's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permit, which regulates stormwater management in the urbanized portion of Holden. Subdivisions are another complicating factor – homeowners' associations are often unable to maintain drainage assets installed during initial construction of new developments. There is no dedicated funding stream for drainage infrastructure, which is funded through the regular capital planning process or through available grants. Staffing constraints limit the DPW's ability to upgrade and maintain drainage assets, especially as the Town acquires more roadway miles through new subdivisions and commercial development.

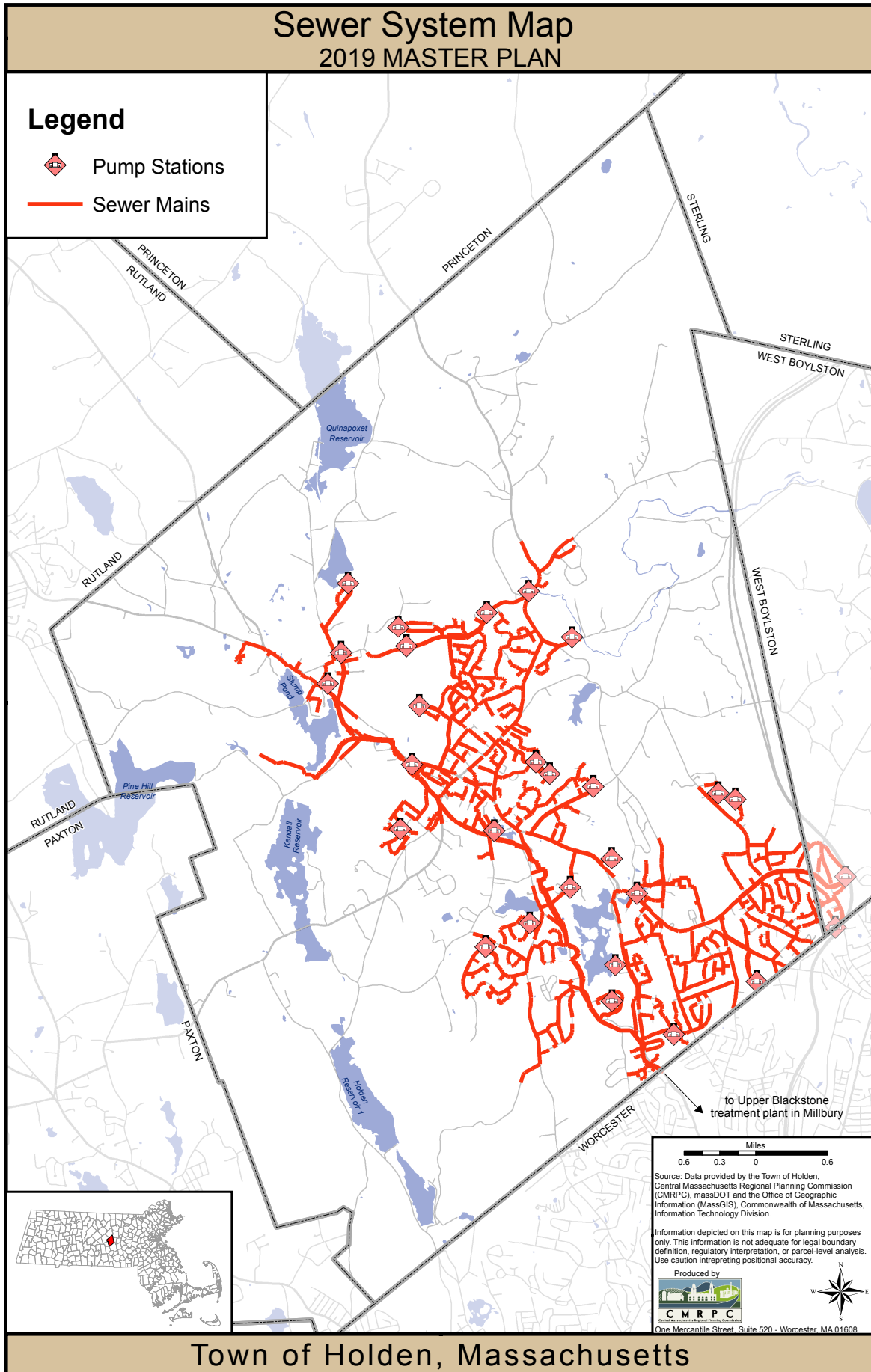
Municipal Light System

Holden's Town-operated electrical system includes 134 miles of overhead lines in six major feeder circuits that serve more than 7,600 residential and commercial customers. Electrical service is available throughout the developed portion of Town. HMLD employs 20 full-time equivalent employees. It operates a vehicle fleet of 17, three of which are in need of replacement in the next one to two years.

The Holden Municipal Light Department is one of 41 municipal electrical providers in Massachusetts. The Department does not generate its own power. Rather, it purchases electricity from outside providers for distribution within Holden. Operations are funded through a customer-funded enterprise fund rather than through the regular Town budget, and HMLD contributes Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) payments and reimbursements for municipal services to the Town (nearly \$430,000 total in 2017). Operations are overseen by an appointed Municipal Electric Power Advisory Board, while rate-setting authority falls under the Board of Selectmen, who serve as the Light Commission.

HMLD has used a number of contracting and cost adjustment techniques in recent years to keep electrical rates low. According to the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company, a public entity that assists municipal light providers, Holden's average cost for a 500-kilowatt-

Map 10 - 3: Sewer System



hour residential user was \$67.27 in 2018 per month, near the lower end of the spectrum for municipal light plants and barely half of the average cost for customers of private utilities such as Eversource and National Grid. Commercial rates are similarly low.

Recent initiatives have included installation of 1,700 LED streetlights, the addition of wind power to HMLD's portfolio of power sources, and continued improvements to resilience such as tree-trimming work and reinforcement of overhead circuits to better withstand storm damage. Planned improvements include upgrades to the aging Chaffin Electrical Substation and system control enhancements. In the longer term, substantial changes to the electrical system may be needed to account for widespread adoption of electric vehicles.

Other Utilities

In addition to its municipal utilities, Holden is served by private providers including Eversource (gas), Verizon (landline telephone), and Spectrum (formerly known as Charter; cable TV and internet). Holden's ten-year licensing agreement with Spectrum

expires in 2020. Local cable access programming is available through Holden Community Television.

Other Services

The Town of Holden provides a number of important services that are not linked directly to its facilities. Over the next several years, Town staff anticipates changes to some of these services, including:

- Relocation of parts of the IT system to the "cloud" to improve efficiency and resilience to hazards.
- Reassessment of the residential trash and recycling collection program (the contract for Casella, the current vendor, is set to expire soon).

Facilities Inventory

An inventory of existing facilities, their condition, and replacement costs is included in Table 10 - 4.

Table 10 - 4 Holden Facilities Inventory (Source: Town of Holden)

Facility Category	Name	Address	Year Built / Major Reno.	Square footage (GSF)	Replacement Cost (\$)*	Handicapped Access	General Condition	Notes
General Government	Town Hall	1196 Main Street	pre 1900	11,000	\$1,071,631	Partial	Fair	Requires HVAC upgrades in short term
General Government	Starbard Building	1204 Main Street	1797	9,000	\$1,776,072	Partial	Poor	Requires structural upgrades in short term
General Government	Senior Center	1130 Main Street	2001	11,000	\$1,500,793	Good	Good	
General Government	Gale Free Library	23 Highland Street	1888/1989	26,000	\$3,706,081	Partial	Good	
Safety & Emergency Services	Public Safety Complex	1370 Main Street	2010	43,000	\$8,718,717	Good	Excellent	

Table 10 - 4 Continued

Facility Category	Name	Address	Year Built / Major Reno.	Square footage (GSF)	Replacement Cost (\$)*	Handicapped Access	General Condition	Notes
Safety & Emergency Services	Fire Station Annex (old station)	1384 Main Street	1957	11,000	\$1,063,846	Partial	Poor	
Public Schools	Wachusett Regional High School	1401 Main Street	1952/2009	375,000	\$28,091,700	Partial	Good	
Public Schools	Mountview Middle School	270 Shrewsbury Street	2016	147,000	\$35,785,000	Good	Excellent	Capital projects funded by Town of Holden
Public Schools	Dawson Elementary School	155 Salisbury Street	1956/2000	61,000	\$8,434,400	Partial	Good	Capital projects funded by Town of Holden
Public Schools	Davis Hill Elementary School	80 Jamieson Road	2000	78,000	\$14,270,400	Good	Good	Capital projects funded by Town of Holden
Public Schools	Mayo Elementary School	351 Bullard Street	1998	89,000	\$15,927,300	Good	Good	Capital projects funded by Town of Holden
Public Schools	Wachusett Regional School District Office/ Early Childhood Center	1745 Main Street	1900/1940/2000	43,000	\$2,475,100	Partial	Fair	
Public Works/ Safety & Emergency Services	Public Works Garage (hosts Chaffin Fire Substation)	87 Adams Road	1960	17,000	\$838,176	Partial	Poor	Requires structural upgrades in short term. Garage to be relocated ca. 2020
Public Works	Water/Sewer Division	Spring Street	1950	2,500	\$244,741	Partial	Fair	
Public Works	Future DPW Facility	18 Industrial Drive	appx. 2020	appx. 43,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	To be completed ca. 2020-21

Table 10 - 4 Continued

Facility Category	Name	Address	Year Built / Major Reno.	Square footage (GSF)	Replacement Cost (\$)*	Handicapped Access	General Condition	Notes
Public Works	Municipal Light Department	1 Holden Street	2001	15,000	\$2,053,693	Good	Good	
Housing Authority	Checkerberry Village (HHA office and 48 units)	9 Flagler Drive	1979	36,000	\$2,409,700	Partial	Good	
Housing Authority	Holden Hills Apartments (8 units)	Towle Drive	1990	15,000	\$1,079,200	N/A	Good	
Active Recreation	Recreation Department	1420 Main Street	1979/2014	6,000	\$1,040,400	Partial	Fair	Former police station
Active Recreation	Trout Brook Reservation (pavilions and lodge)	320 Manning Street	1970	2,000	\$136,685	Partial	Good	
Active Recreation	Eagle Lake Reservation (bathhouse)	66 Causeway Street	Unk.	Unk.	\$52,402	Partial	Fair	
Active Recreation	Dawson Recreation Area (lifeguard building, bathhouse and storage)	200 Salisbury Street	2003	8,000	\$857,271	Good	Good	
Active Recreation	Bandstand (near Senior Center)	1130 Main Street	1992	N/A	\$3,026	Partial	Good	
Other Facilities	Hendricks House and Barn	1157 Main Street	1890	3,000	\$363,411	Poor	Good	Occ. by Holden Historical Society
Other Facilities	Damon House	1174 Main Street	1850	5,000	\$480,706	Poor	Good	Occ. by various tenants
Other Facilities	Grove Cemetery (chapel, vault and garage)	Main Street	appx. 1925	Unk.	\$69,850	N/A	Good	
Other Facilities	Old Grist Mill Pond Dam	Lincoln Avenue	Unk.	N/A	Unk.	N/A	Poor	

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As part of the Master Plan update process, Holden conducted outreach activities to help identify needs and priorities for the future of the Town's facilities and services. Key takeaways from these activities relevant to public facilities and services are as follows:

- Holden residents place a high priority on school quality, town services, and facilities. Holden's schools, Gale Free Library, and Eagle Lake Recreation Area are among residents' most cherished assets.
- The most frequently utilized facilities are parks and open space, other recreational facilities, and the Library. While residents are very satisfied with the Library facility and services, residents are less satisfied with the Town's recreational facilities and parks/open spaces (Eagle Lake and the Town pool most particularly).
- Respondents identified a desire for dog parks, additional indoor recreational facilities (including an indoor pool), a dedicated youth center, renewed recreational options at Eagle Lake, additional senior services, and full-day kindergarten.
- Residents lack familiarity with some Town departments and services. Familiarity with many governing boards and commissions is also low.
- Satisfaction with the Municipal Light Plant is high. Residents are also highly satisfied with Town water and sewer service. Some respondents expressed an interest in seeing the water and sewer networks extended. Support for doing so is not widespread. More options and frequency for household waste disposal (especially for yard waste and recycling) is desired, as are increased options for cable TV and internet.
- Residents would like wider utilization of green energy and cleanup of brownfields sites.

Administrative Offices: The central town administrative offices (Town Hall and the Starbard Building) require fairly substantial structural and other improvements and are not well configured for efficient, modern operations, lacking office and storage space.

Fire Protection for the Southern Portion of Town: The Chaffins Fire Substation that serves the southern part of Holden is obsolete and in deteriorating condition. The Public Works department, which currently shares the building, will be relocating to the new DPW building on Industrial Drive in the next few years.

Aging Building Systems: As facilities built in the late 1990s/early 2000s boom of public construction start to age, many building systems will begin to reach their designed lifespans; while replacement of these items is a challenge, it is also an opportunity to install more efficient state-of-the-art systems.

Access for the Disabled: As documented in the Gienapp Design building assessment report, a number of Town buildings and schools are in limited compliance with ADA and related state laws such as 521 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) Architectural Access Board Regulations; substantial alterations to existing facilities may also trigger the need for full accessibility.

Exposure to Natural Hazards: While Holden is in relatively good shape compared to many communities, a number of Town buildings, other facilities, and infrastructure elements are exposed to natural hazards now or are likely to become vulnerable as the climate changes and storm severity increases.

DPW Facilities: Relocation of DPW functions to the Industrial Drive site in the next 2 to 3 years creates opportunities for reuse of the current Highway Garage site on Adams Road and possibly the Water/Sewer Division office on Spring Street.

Park Link: The new DPW property at Industrial Drive (where new playing fields are also expected to be installed) offers an opportunity for connection by trail to the nearby Dawson Recreation Area to allow for a diverse array of recreational opportunities at a single complex, which may help alleviate crowding.

Full-Day Kindergarten: Classroom capacity is inadequate to implement full-day kindergarten at WRSD schools located in Holden, if desired (other District schools may potentially have capacity for Holden students, but transportation and funding issues may prove difficult to resolve).

Sewer System Capacity: While sewer treatment capacity appears adequate for near- and mid-term growth (assuming 2017 was a high-usage outlier), longer-term growth may be constrained without additional treatment capacity through the UBWPAD and/or through additional implementation of efficiency measures (infiltration/inflow improvements, homeowner education programs, etc.).

Water and Sewer Mains: Remaining asbestos concrete water and sewer mains are prone to rupture and require special handling during maintenance.

Stormwater Drainage: Infrastructure and funding challenges are not being fully met currently and can be expected to become more difficult as development continues, rainfall events intensify, and compliance with the new EPA MS4 permit is required.

Services for Seniors: As Holden's senior population peaks in the next decade-plus, services, and possibly facilities, may become inadequate to address the needs of local residents.

Cable TV/internet: Satisfaction with the current cable provider is relatively low, based on survey results; expiration of the current provider agreement in 2020

represents an opportunity to review this service and evaluate alternatives.

Staffing: Several departments have expressed concerns about maintaining adequate staffing levels for both current and future needs.



GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS

The following section outlines the principal recommendations of this chapter. It is organized into a series of goals, each with attendant objectives and recommended action items to achieve them. The goals and objectives are based on input from community meetings, the community survey and close workshopping with the Steering Committee. The action items accompanying the objectives will also be reflected in the Implementation Chapter (Chapter 11).

Goal 10.1: Ensure public facilities meet the needs of Holden's population

Objective 10.1.1: Ensure that facilities are well-maintained and functioning optimally.

- **Action Item 10.1.1.1:** Implement the recommendations of the Town and School Building Assessment.
- **Action Item 10.1.1.2:** Ensure that existing facilities are maintained and operated appropriately and that life-limited components are replaced regularly; consider taking actions to extend the life of life-limited components and

CAPITAL ITEMS

Consider options for renovation/reconstruction to address space constraints and structural, code, and other concerns at the Town Hall and Starbard Building, as well as options for replacement with a new or adaptively reused facility.

Consider options to replace the deficient Chaffins Fire substation; explore options for constructing a new station elsewhere on the Adams Road site following relocation of the Highway Department to its new facility.

Continue efforts to migrate Town information technology systems to the cloud

Install backup power systems at additional key Town facilities.

Consider relocating or otherwise reinforcing sewer pump stations that are in or adjacent to flood zones, per the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2017): Gail Drive, Industrial Drive, and Jefferson.

Continue and expand upon existing wastewater conservation measures (infiltration/inflow reduction, etc.).

Develop and implement a long-term plan to replace existing drainage structures with larger capacity structures (and/or with nature-based alternatives) in the expectation of greater peak flows.

Implement the recommendations of the Town and School Building Assessment.

seek more sustainable alternatives with longer life spans.

- **Action Item 10.1.1.3:** Using the Town and School Building Assessment as a first phase, complete a full facilities master plan that reviews building conditions and usage, assesses staffing and functional needs, and lays out a multi-decade program for building renovation and replacement.

Objective 10.1.2: Develop and implement a solution to improve the Town's central administrative facilities at the Town Hall and Starbard Building.

- **Action Item 10.1.2.1:** Consider options for renovation/reconstruction to address space constraints and structural, code, and other concerns at the existing facilities, as well as options for replacement with a new or adaptively reused facility.

Objective 10.1.3: Develop and implement a solution for providing long-term fire protection coverage to the southern portion of the Town.

- **Action Item 10.1.3.1:** Consider options to replace the deficient Chaffins Fire Substation; explore options for constructing a new station elsewhere on the Adams Road site following relocation of the Highway Department to its new facility.
- **Action Item 10.1.3.2:** Continue to review fire suppression capacity.

Objective 10.1.4: Complete and implement an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan that identifies physical and programmatic barriers to access for disabled persons.

- **Action Item 10.1.4.1:** Remove programmatic and policy barriers to ADA mobility and (as necessary) architectural barriers.
- **Action Item 10.1.4.2:** Consider establishing a local Commission on Disability to complete, monitor, and aid in the implementation of an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

Goal 10.2: Maintain long-term funding mechanisms to provide for future public facility needs.

Objective 10.2.1: Continue the existing capital planning process and make refinements as needed.

- **Action Item 10.2.1.1:** Regularly review expiring debt to understand the year-by-year capacity for borrowing in advance of future capital needs in order to minimize the need for overrides and debt exclusions.
- **Action Item 10.2.1.2:** Consider including preliminary information on major long-term capital projects in Capital Plans well in advance of formal capital requests in order to make the community more aware of upcoming needs.
- **Action Item 10.2.1.3:** Continue making the capital planning process transparent and participatory in order to make the community more aware of upcoming needs.

Goal 10.3: Improve the sustainability and resilience of Town operations.

Objective 10.3.1: Make Town operations more resilient to natural and other hazards.

- **Action Item 10.3.1.1:** Implement the recommendations of the Holden Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (CMRPC, 2017); update the plan per FEMA requirement every 5 years.
- **Action Item 10.3.1.2:** Continue efforts to migrate Town information technology systems to the cloud.
- **Action Item 10.3.1.2:** Consider backup power systems at additional key Town facilities, including the Town Hall and Starbard Building.
- **Action Item 10.3.1.4:** Continue to periodically update the Continuity of Operations plan (COOP) for the local government.

- **Action Item 10.3.1.5:** Consider relocating or otherwise reinforcing sewer pump stations that are in or adjacent to flood zones, per the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. (CMRPC, 2017)

Objective 10.3.2: Make Town operations more sustainable.

- **Action Item 10.3.2.1:** Conduct an energy audit of Town facilities and operations to identify areas of inefficiency; make upgrades as needed.
- **Action Item 10.3.2.2:** Identify strategies to access state funding for energy efficiency projects.
- **Action Item 10.3.2.3:** Assess green infrastructure opportunities for stormwater management. Develop a list of specific priorities, assess feasibility and cost, rank priority projects in terms of climate resilience potential, and develop concept designs for key projects. Review Town regulations and update as necessary to support green infrastructure and low-impact development and encourage green infrastructure to be incorporated into all roadway projects.

Goal 10.4: Deliver infrastructure that meets existing and future Town needs.

Objective 10.4.1: Ensure an adequate water supply for existing and future needs.

- **Action Item 10.4.1.1:** Continue to monitor water system usage in comparison to system capacity.
- **Action Item 10.4.1.2:** Continue to expand upon existing water conservation measures.
- **Action Item 10.4.1.3:** If warranted by usage trends, develop a plan for adding capacity to the system through additional sources or through additional water sourced from outside partners.

Objective 10.4.2: Ensure adequate sewer capacity for existing and future needs.

- **Action Item 10.4.2.1:** Continue to monitor sewer system usage in comparison to system treatment capacity per the Upper Blackstone Wastewater Pollution Abatement District (UBWPAD) agreement.
- **Action Item 10.4.2.2:** Continue and expand upon existing wastewater conservation measures (infiltration/inflow reduction, etc.).
- **Action Item 10.4.2.3:** Negotiate a new Sewer Use Agreement with DCR, to replace the 2000 SUA between the Worcester and DCR, which expires in 2020. Ensure proper billing methodology and future growth in system.

Objective 10.4.3: Ensure adequate stormwater management capacity for existing and future needs.

- **Action Item 10.4.3.1:** Implement Holden's new EPA MS4 permit, including public outreach, mapping, review of existing local stormwater regulations, and support for low-impact development.
- **Action Item 10.4.3.2:** Consider initiating a stormwater utility fee to fund stormwater management infrastructure. Track expenses to manage 2016 MS4 permit and consider additional funding sources as may be necessary, including a stormwater utility.
- **Action Item 10.4.3.3:** Develop and implement a long-term plan to replace existing drainage structures with larger capacity structures (and/or with nature-based alternatives) in the expectation of greater peak flows.

Objective 10.4.4: Ensure adequate electrical distribution capacity for existing and future needs.

- **Action Item 10.4.4.1:** Conduct a feasibility study of cybersecurity and remote substation viewing capacity for the Municipal Light Department.

- **Action Item 10.4.4.2:** Conduct a system-wide study of the Municipal Light Department that includes a long-term capital assets plan.
- **Action Item 10.4.4.3:** Evaluate organizational efficiency of the Municipal Light Department and implement improvements.
- **Action Item 10.4.4.4:** Develop a technology road map that ensures the Municipal Light Department is kept up-to-date.

Objective 10.4.5: Consider regulatory tools to prevent the Town from exceeding its utility capacity or expanding services areas to an untenable degree.

- **Action Item 10.4.5.1:** Explore strategies to manage and regulate where water and sewer hookups may be granted, including delineating a sewer/water service district on the zoning map, with consideration for extensions outside the service boundary by special permit.

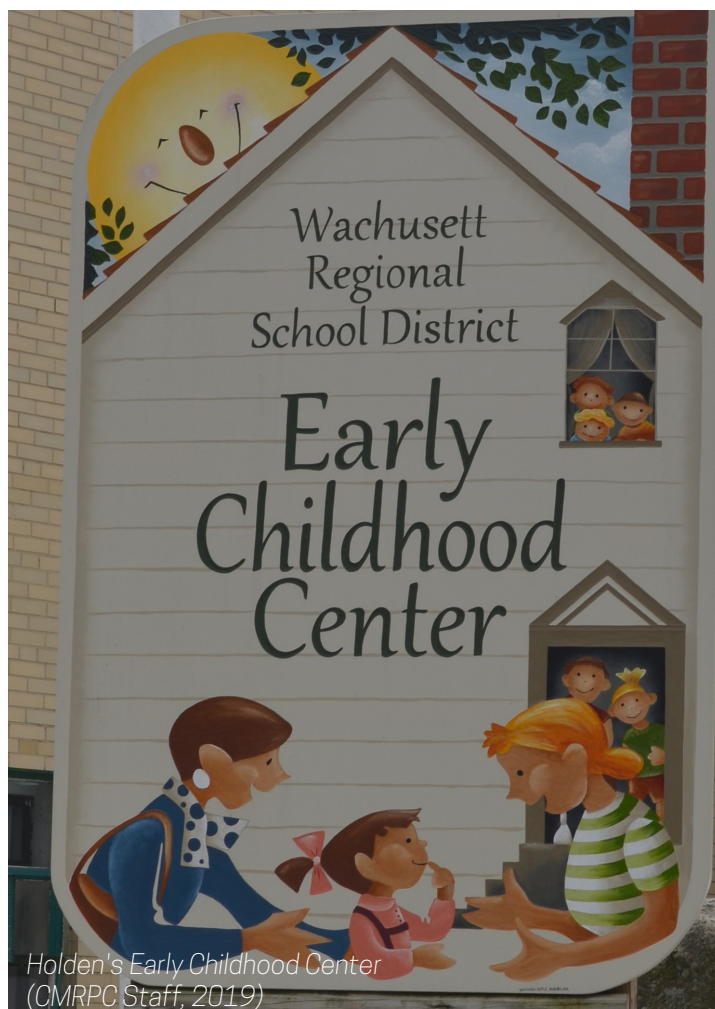
Goal 10.5: Uphold the high quality of Holden's educational system and facilities.

Objective 10.5.1: Maintain existing services and facilities.

- **Action Item 10.5.1.1:** Continue to coordinate with the Wachusett Regional School District and other member communities to adequately fund operations and facilities and create a plan to accommodate growth.
- **Action Item 10.5.1.2:** Implement the recommendations of the Town and School Building Assessment at the three Town-owned elementary schools.

Objective 10.5.2: Provide desirable new services and facilities.

- **Action Item 10.5.2.1:** Track demographic and development trends within Town to understand better locations and sizes of school facilities needed.
- **Action Item 10.5.2.2:** Coordinate with the Wachusett Regional School District and the Massachusetts School Building Authority regarding possible future expansion of facilities.



Holden's Early Childhood Center
(CMRPC Staff, 2019)

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES & SERVICES

Holden Community Survey Results

What does
Holden think about
Municipal Facilities
and Services?

FACILITY

% USERS SATISFIED

Gale Library	99
Davis Hill Elementary School	99
Mayo Elementary	94
Dawson Elementary	95
Mountview Middle School	91
Wachusett Regional High School	89
Recreational facilities	87
Parks and open spaces	87
Town Hall	91
Town website	90
Town events	92
Online bill pay	90
Senior center	95



Holden Tomorrow
planning our future together

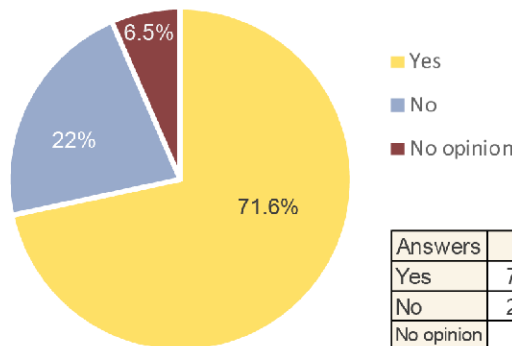
FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.holdenmasterplan.com Town of Holden Master Plan Committee

SCHOOLS

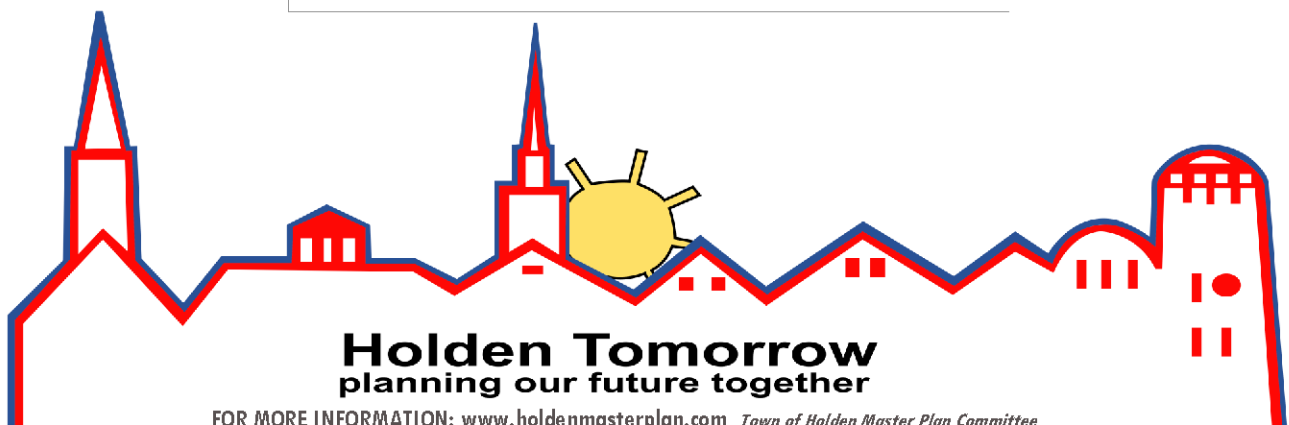
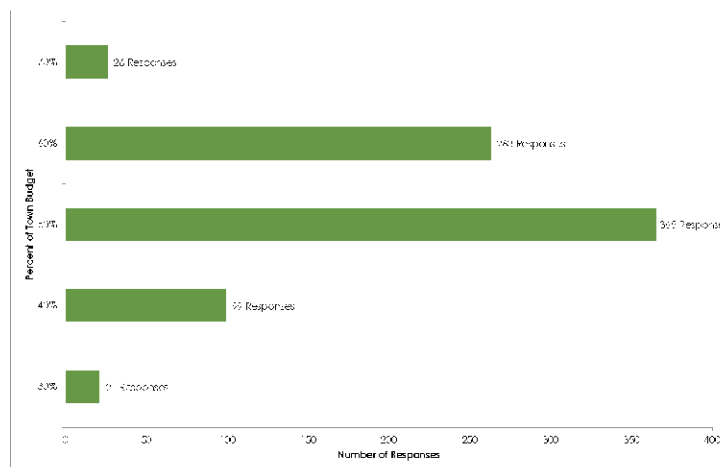
Holden Community Survey Results

What does
Holden think
about Schools?

**DID THE QUALITY OF THE WACHUSETT
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FACTOR INTO
YOUR DECISION TO LIVE IN HOLDEN?**



**WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE TOWN BUDGET
SHOULD BE ALLOCATED TO EDUCATION?**



FOR MORE INFORMATION: www.holdenmasterplan.com Town of Holden Master Plan Committee