

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

This element of the Comprehensive Plan presents an inventory of services and facilities available to the people of Charlestown. These services and facilities are largely provided by the municipal government, including police, public works, recreation and administrative services. Other services are provided by the state or federal government, or by quasi-public organizations such as the local fire districts. This element also evaluates current and future needs for services and facilities. Recommendations for meeting service/facility needs are presented along with strategies for implementing them.

This element addresses all community services and facilities with the exception of recreation (discussed in the Open Space and Recreation Element) and roads (discussed in the Circulation Element).

Principal services/facilities issues were identified through discussions with the CPCAC and town officials, review of the 1984 Comprehensive Plan and 1990 public opinion survey, and the application of standards for gauging the adequacy of services/facilities for a given population. The principal issues related to this element that were identified by the CPCAC and Planning Commission are (in order of priority):

1. High cost of school system and adequacy of regional system;
2. Protection of land for future water supply;
3. Impact of water/wastewater problems on lot size;
4. Adequacy of solid waste disposal (trash);
5. Provision of septage disposal options;
6. Need for community center;
7. Impact of water/wastewater problems on property values;

8. Availability of ballfields/recreational areas;
9. Police coverage in winter/summer;
10. Maintenance of public utilities on private roads;
11. Coordination of school and other town departments;
12. Adequacy of volunteer staff;
13. Improvement of access routes to expedite police/ambulance response time;
14. Provision of town water;
15. Provision of town sewer;
16. Improvement of first aid/medical capabilities within school system.

GOALS & POLICIES

Goals and Policies of the Town of Charlestown

The following goals and policies have been developed through review of the 1984 Plan and discussion with the CPCAC and Charlestown residents and officials.

Major Goals

To continue to provide Charlestown residents and visitors with a high level of services, which will support the quality of life enjoyed in the town.

To develop facilities and services in a way that is compatible with protecting the town's natural and cultural resources and rural character, and reasonable tax rate.

Policies

- To maintain the high level of expertise that currently exists among town employees and volunteers.
- To plan for expansions or changes in services and facilities in advance, with full study given to needs, alternatives, and costs.
- To maintain and upgrade the level or amount of staff or space as appropriate to meet the changing needs of the residents and visitors.
- To provide support where possible to volunteer and quasi-public organizations in their efforts to provide community services.
- To participate in the provisions of regional or State-wide services when appropriate to Town needs.
- To continue the long-range capital improvement program to permit scheduling of capital needs in accordance with community needs and the ability to pay for such projects.
- To provide adequate funding in the annual Town budget for the operation of essential community services.
- To utilize funding from State, Federal and other sources where such funding is consistent with community policies.

Goals and Policies of the State of Rhode Island

The following state goals and policies related to community services and facilities are identified in the RI Department of Administration, Division of Planning's State Guide Plan Element 110 Goals and Policies (1974), as cited in their State Guide Plan Overview (June 1989):

GOAL 1:

Improvement of the quality of public educational facilities at all levels.

1. Expand the use of modern teaching equipment and provide up-to-date school buildings and facilities.
2. Expand the resources and use of education television.
3. Increase the financial resources to be used in the construction, equipment, and maintenance of school buildings and facilities.
4. Regionalize at least the specialized facilities and services to gain operating efficiencies and broaden the service base.
5. Improve the physical training programs and facilities, especially in the case of female students.
6. Improve the natural science laboratory facilities, particularly on the elementary level.

GOAL 2:

Coordinated Development and use of the state's public water resources.

1. Base priority for development of water resources on all factors associated with both the sources and the contemplated uses.
2. Assure that those surface and groundwater sources which have been identified as good potential sources for future development receive the required degree of protection and management.
3. Coordinate development of local systems and coordinate planning for future water resource development with other elements of the state guide plan.
4. Encourage the development of unified municipal-wide, or regional systems to service those communities now served by several small systems or by special districts.
5. Maximize the re-use of water required for industrial processing.
6. Reduce water pollution and upgrade water quality to its eventual use.
7. Consider the multiple use potential for all water resource development projects.
8. Consider ways to reduce demand and use of public water, including reorganization of existing price structures.

GOAL 3:

Achievement of the highest possible standards of public health and safety in public facilities and services.

1. Strengthen the system of medical care delivery throughout the state so as to meet the needs of an expanding, aging population.
2. Operate health care facilities in a manner designed to minimize cost increases.

3. Extend employee health benefits and health insurance coverage.
4. Locate facilities so as to properly serve present and future population distributions.
5. Concentrate facilities to maximize joint use of specialized facilities and equipment, staff specialists, and teaching programs.
6. Improve the physical resources of the state health laboratories.
7. Train more medical people and make greater use of qualified para-medics as "field" medical officers.

GOAL 4.

Improvement law enforcement and correction services and facilities.

1. Improve the quality of the law enforcement agencies in the state through increased manpower, raising the qualifications for law-enforcement officers and improved facilities and equipment.
2. Broaden the training of law enforcement officers to include courses in social science and community relations.
3. Increase the representation of minority groups in the state's law enforcement agencies.
4. Improve the quality of the state's correction institutions through improved facilities and equipment, improved training for staff personnel and improved job and skill training programs and facilities for inmates.
5. Improve and expand probation and ex-convict counseling programs.
6. Expand the scope of outside placement and work and education release programs as an alternative to incarceration.

MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET

Municipal Organization

Charlestown's municipal organization is shown in Figure 1. The Town Council, Planning Commission, School Committee members and Election Officials are elected officials; all others are appointed by the Town Council. Town employees and those who serve on boards and commissions cannot be replaced without just cause unless, in the case of boards/commissions, their term expires. Most of the municipal government's business is conducted from the Charlestown Town Hall (Figure 2). Additional municipal services/facilities are provided at the Town Landfill (Figure 2) or at scattered recreation sites (see Open Space and Recreation Element).

Detailed descriptions of each municipal department are provided in the following section - Inventory and Needs Analysis. Note that public school services are provided by the Chariho Regional School District, with no direct involvement of municipal government except for funding. Also note that fire protection, ambulance, and library services are provided by private organizations outside of the municipal government. These other services are also described in the following section.

The following summaries of Charlestown's annual budget and recent financial trends provides a basic context for evaluating the town's services and facilities. An in-depth discussion of municipal finance is presented in the Economic Development Element of this plan.

Annual Budget

Charlestown is currently operating with an annual budget of approximately \$10 million dollars. Revenues projected for FY 1992 total \$9,870,671. Property taxes account for approximately 74% of revenues, with intergovernmental (state/federal) assistance accounting for about 21%. Municipal fees account for about 4% of revenues. Fees collected by various departments are returned to the General Fund.

Expenditures projected for FY 1992 total \$9,870,671. As shown in Table 1, expenditures for education account for approximately 66% of total expenditures. Public safety (8%), town and employee insurance (6%), public works (5%) and debt service (4%) together account for the majority on non-education related municipal expenditures.

As shown in Table 1, Charlestown's FY 1992 budget is 2.5% less than the actual FY 1991 budget. This is due principally to a cut in the Chariho Regional School District budget. Pursuant to the legal requirements that the district operates under, local assessments for educational contributions to Chariho were decreased in response to the budget cut. Another major savings was realized through the consolidation / restructuring of a number of Charlestown's outstanding debts. This situation has allowed the Town to lower its property tax rate by 2.9%.

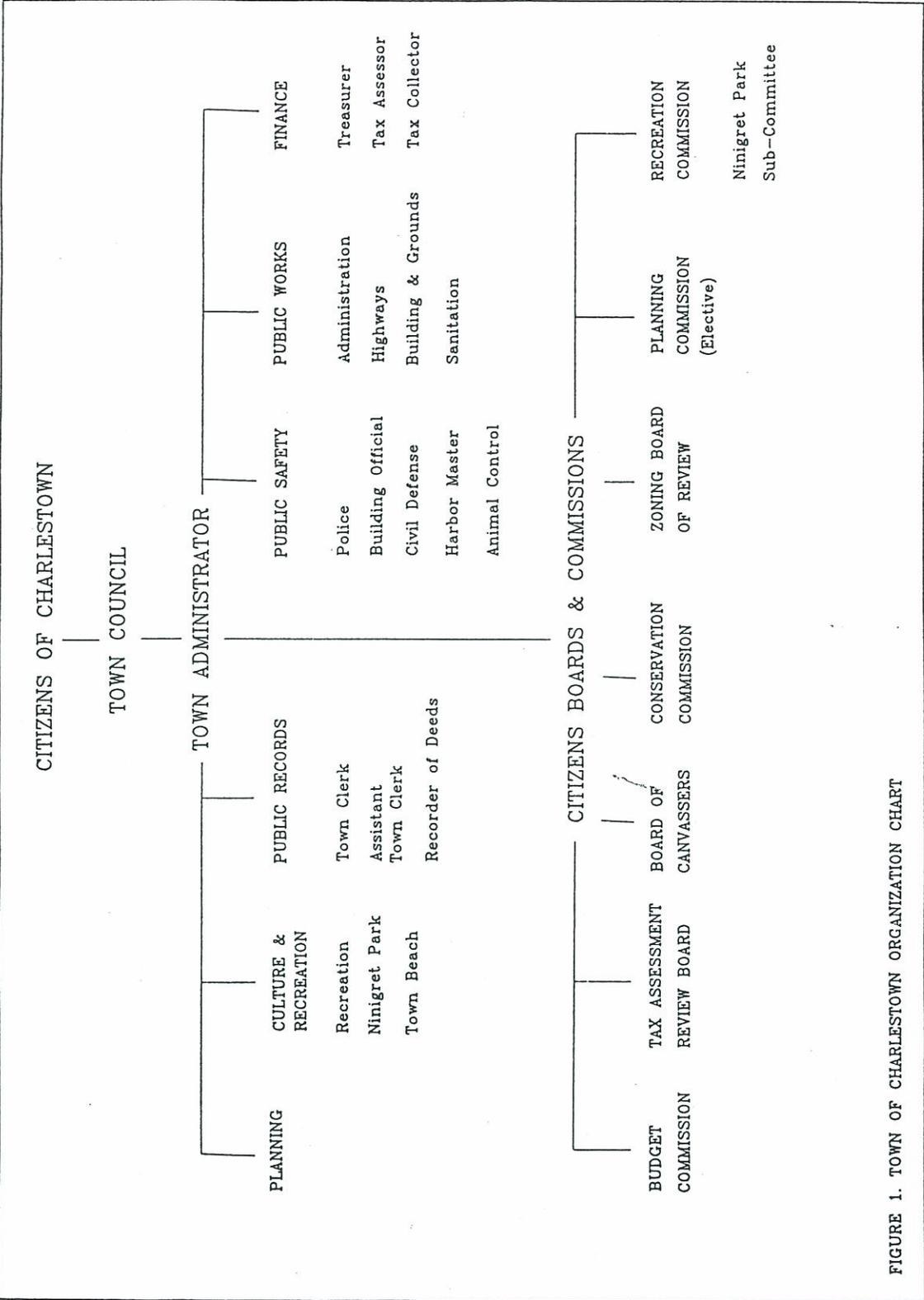


FIGURE 1. TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN ORGANIZATION CHART

TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
FISCAL YEAR 1991-92 BUDGET PROPOSAL

DEPT #	NAME	FY 91 (Actual)	FY 92 (Adopted)	AMOUNT CHANGE (\$)	AMOUNT CHANGE (%)
4100	TOWN COUNCIL	69,485	66,550	(2,935)	-4.22
4200	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	73,600	80,470	(2,935)	9.33
4300	ELECTIONS	10,000	9,200	(800)	-8.00
4400	TREASURER	660475	70,445	3,700	5.54
4500	TAX ASSESSOR	70,820	72,151	1,331	1.88
4600	TAX COLLECTOR	48,105	54,942	6,837	14.21
4700	PUBLIC RECORDS	113,950	107,894	(6,056)	-5.31
4800	PLANNING	53,588	55,959	2,371	4.42
4900	BOARDS & COMMS	6,300	9,200	2,900	46.03
5100	POLICE	621,011	659,961	38,950	6.27
5200	BUILDING INSPECTOR	58,620	56,491	(2,129)	-3.63
5300	CIVIL DEFENSE	250	250	0	0.00
5400	ANIMAL CONTROL	25,490	26,390	900	3.53
5500	HARBOR MASTER	8,000	9,000	1,000	12.50
6100	DPW-ADMINISTRATION	51,210	51,139	(71)	-0.14
6200	DPW-HIGHWAY	244,110	249,752	5,642	2.31
6300	DPW-BLDG & GRNDS	42,850	48,375	5,525	12.89
6400	DPW-SANITATION	92,450	107,950	15,500	16.77
7100	PUBLIC WELFARE	5,500	5,500	0	0.00
7150	SOCIAL AGENCIES	36,640	40,590	3,950	10.78
7279	CROSS MILLS LIB.	93,000	97,185	4,185	4.50
8100	REC-PROGRAMS	69,040	73,468	4,428	6.41
8200	REC-TOWN BEACH	53,940	44,660	(9,280)	-17.20
8300	REC-NINIGRET PARK	22,180	30,790	8,610	38.82
8400	REC-DRIVING RANGE	17,790	24,178	6,208	34.55
8500	REC-BLS BEACH	70,238	68,558	(1,680)	-2.39
9100	DEBT SERVICE	520,650	405,868	(114,782)	-22.05
9300	JUDGEMNTS & DAMAGES	5,000	5,000	0	0.00
9400	EMPLOYEE INSURANCE	429,750	486,318	56,568	13.16
9500	TOWN INSURANCE	115,000	70,000	(45,000)	-39.13
9600	POLICE CONTINGENCY	0	27,000	27,000	100.00
10000	CAPITAL IMPRV.	126,700	200,614	73,914	58.34
TOTAL MUNICIPAL		3,222,192	3,315,848	93,656	2.91
EDUCATION		6,904,827	6,554,823	(350,004)	-5.07
TOTAL TOWN BUDGET		10,127,019	9,870,671	(256,348)	-2.53

Financial Trends

A report prepared by the Town Treasurer in December of 1990 - Report of Fiscal Indicators FY 81 - FY 90 provides an overview of municipal financial trends over the past decade. The report shows the Town to be in a very good financial position for several reasons:

- o Revenues have balanced expenditures, annual budgets are balanced with no significant deficit spending;
- o The percent of revenues from intergovernmental sources has increased since 1981 to become a significant portion of the Town's annual revenue. Most of this is state assistance related to Charlestown's share of Chariho school costs. Much of the remainder has been in the form of grants which were vigorously pursued by Town officials (open space acquisitions, police equipment, computer systems, and others);
- o Outstanding debt, as a percentage of the total tax base, has dropped significantly since the early 1980's, even with the addition of substantial debts related to open space acquisitions in the late 1980's. In 1990 the Town's outstanding debt was 0.42% of the tax base - a very low percentage compared to other Rhode Island cities and towns.

A major factor in the Town's financial strength is the growth in the number and assessed value of seasonal homes during the mid to late 1980's. During this period the region experienced a building boom. Many expensive homes were built by non-residents for seasonal use, particularly in the coastal areas of Charlestown. This, along with town-wide re-evaluation in 1985, led to a dramatic increase in the town's tax base. At the same time, many of the new homes were only used seasonally, therefore, the homeowners were not sending their children to school in the area. The Town thereby realized a major tax assessment advantage of new growth without experiencing the associated education tax burden.

INVENTORY AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

Overview

The previous section described the Town's administrative organization for providing services. Table 2 below lists major municipal land holdings and structures. Major equipment is listed in Table 3.

A description of available services and facilities provided by each Town Department or outside organization follows Tables 2 and 3. The following Town Departments and outside service organizations are separately described:

Town Administrator's Office;
Citizens Boards and Commissions;
Public Records;
Finance;
Planning;
Recreation;
Public Works;
Public Safety;
Public Welfare;
Fire Districts;
Ambulance/Rescue;
Library;
Schools.

Each of these sections provides an inventory of current staffing levels, available equipment/facilities, and a description of the type of services provided. In each section, this inventory is followed by a listing of needs related to the service or facility. Both existing needs and potential future needs are identified.

Note that services/facilities related to transportation (road maintenance/improvement) are summarized in this element but described fully in the Circulation Element of this Plan. Similarly, the Open Space and Recreation Element provides the principal source of information on parks and recreation services/facilities provided by the Town. Issues concerning water and sewer service (not presently provided by the Town) have been identified and discussed in the Land Use and Natural Resources Elements. Water/sewer issues are not reiterated in this element, but related recommendations are presented in the final section of this element.

Table 2

MAJOR MUNICIPAL LAND HOLDINGS AND STRUCTURES*

Town Hall and Playing Field (13 acres)

Town Hall Complex - \$1,720,000

Landfill (68 acres)

Landfill Garage - \$80,000

Animal Shelter - \$60,000

Charlestown School, Field (21 acres)
Elementary School Building

Charlestown Town Beach & Environs (16 acres)

Ninigret Park (227 acres)

Entrance Residence - \$80,000

Senior Center - \$80,000

Pavilion - \$30,000

Beach Facility - \$35,000

Nature Center - \$70,000

Observatory - \$60,000

Warehouse - \$120,000

Park Office - \$40,000

Columbia Heights Playground (2 acres)

Blue Shutters Beach (3 acres)

Concession Stand - \$108,000

Schoolhouse Pond Open Space (100 acres)

Grandpre Park (3 acres)

Wicklund Field (2 acres)

Town Golf Driving Range (7 acres)

Office/Concession - \$12,000

Equipment Building - \$8,000

TOTAL ACREAGE = 462 acres

TOTAL INSURED VALUE OF STRUCTURES = \$2,500,000

* Approximate acreage shown in (), structure value shown is the insured amount.

Table 3

MAJOR MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT*

Heavy Equipment

- 5 International Dump Trucks - 1983 - 1990, (\$33,000 - \$38,000 ea.)
- 1 Elgin Pelican - 1988 (\$76,600)
- 1 Corey Flatbed - 1989 (\$1,200)

Police Cruisers

- 8 Ford Crown Vict. - 1984 - 1990 (\$8,000 - \$14,000)

Other Vehicles

- 4 Pickup Trucks - 1982 - 1989 (\$0 - \$8,600)
- 2 Ford LTD Wagons - 1985 (\$8,500), 1989 (\$16,095)
- 1 Diesel Van - 1984 (\$0)
- 1 Ford Bronco - 1986 (\$9,500)
- 1 Willy Jeep - 1953 (\$0)

Computer Equipment

- 2 IBM XT/8088 PCs
- 5 IBM AT/80286 PCs
- 8 IBM 80386 PCs
- 7 IBM PS/2 PCs
- 2 AcerStations
- 10 Computer Printers
- Numerous Hard Storage/Tape Backup Devices

* Equipment values are FY 92 insured amounts.

Town Administrator's Office

Inventory

Personnel:

Town Administrator
1 Secretary/Clerk

Facilities/Equipment:

Office space, office equipment, Town Hall
Town Administrator's car

Responsibilities:

The Town Administrator is the focus for much of the business conducted by the Town (Figure 1). The Administrator is the main contact between the Town Council and Charlestown's professional staff, Boards and Commissions. The Administrator provides overall direction and oversight to Town Departments, has a key role in the budget process, and manages Town personnel. He provides significant input on major new initiatives. The Administrator is the highest appointed official in Charlestown and therefore has a major responsibility in responding to public needs and concerns.

Major new or ongoing initiatives of the Town Administrator include:

- o A comprehensive personnel classification / wage survey is underway. It will build upon the Boyer, Bennett & Shaw, Inc. study conducted in 1990. The comprehensive study will include job descriptions for Town personnel along with a comparative analysis of wages in nearby/similar communities;
- o The Administrator is developing and evaluating alternative sewage sludge / septage treatment and disposal options for the community towards the end of alleviating ISDS pollution problems which now occur in certain areas of the town.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Town Administrator's Office:

- o Salary adjustments for some municipal employees appear to be needed in order to stay competitive and retain a highly qualified and motivated staff. Such salary adjustments would be recommended to the Town Council by the Administrator based, in part, upon the results of the comprehensive wage/classification study;
- o A town personnel ordinance needs to be developed and instituted in order to provide guidance on job responsibilities, and necessary qualifications/experience.

Citizens Boards and Committees

Inventory

Personnel:

The ten boards, commissions, and committees in Charlestown include over fifty citizen members. These groups receive assistance from various town personnel, particularly those associated with the Town Administrator's Office and Public Records Department.

Facilities/Equipment:

Meeting space, office equipment, Town Hall

Responsibilities:

Citizens boards and committees provide review and guidance functions to a number of different Town Departments and individuals. All board/commission members are appointed, with the exception of the School Committee, Planning Commission, and Election Officials who are elected. The following Boards and Commissions are active on an ongoing basis:

Budget Commission - five members, three year appointments;

Board of Canvassers - three members, six year appointments;

Conservation Commission - seven members, three year appointments;

Election Officials - moderator and clerk for each of three districts elected at November election;

Recreation Commission - five members, three year appointments;

School Committee - four year elective terms;

Senior Citizens - seven members, two year appointments;

Planning Commission - five members, six year elective term (two alternates for two year terms);

Public Health - three appointed members;

Tax Assessment Review Commission - three members, three year appointments;

Zoning Board of Review - five members, appointed for five years, two alternates for one year.

Needs

No needs were identified with regard to the operation of citizens boards and commissions.

Public Records

Inventory

Personnel:

Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
1 Records Clerk

Facilities/Equipment:

Office space, office equipment, Town Hall

Responsibilities:

The Public Records Department includes the Town Clerk (Department Head), Assistant Town Clerk, and Recorder of Deeds. This Department is responsible for a wide variety of record keeping including land evidence records, public notices, meeting agendas/minutes, and correspondence of the Town Council and Town Administrator. All official Town records and documents are maintained by this department. The Town Clerk is responsible for instituting any changes made to Town codes and ordinances. Regulatory review and summary statistics regarding the issuance of licences, certifications and permits are also the responsibility of this department;

The Town Clerk is a focal point for interaction with the public. The Town Clerk acts as a liaison between the public and various Town officials, pursuing requests for information and assuring that the proper officials are informed about public inquiries/complaints.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Public Records Department:

- o Continued funding for outside services to assist in computerization of deeds, map/records restoration, and for purchase of vault equipment.

Finance

Inventory

Personnel:

Town Treasurer

2 part time Secretaries/Clerks (20 hours/week ea.)
25% of Town Administrator's Secretary's time

Town Tax Assessor

2 clerks (1 @ 40 hours/week, 1 @ 21 hours/week)

Town Tax Collector

1 clerk

Facilities/Equipment:

Office space, office equipment, Town Hall

Town Tax Assessor's car

Tax assessment computer software and hardware

Responsibilities:

The Finance Department includes the Town Treasurer (Department Head), Tax Collector, Assessor, and clerical support. While these individuals coordinate their efforts, their functions are distinct, as described below.

Town Treasurer:

The Treasurer has principal responsibility for developing and administering the municipal budget. The Treasurer is also charged with "...the formulation of effective policies and procedures which impact the Town's fiscal management." (BBS 1990). Financial responsibilities include maintenance of the general ledger, assistance in bond issuance, grant administration, fund investment, town and employee insurance administration, payroll administration, and purchasing coordination. The Treasurer also provides technical assistance in matters of finance to other local government officials, including the preparation of financial analyses and forecasts. The Treasurer is a member of the Chariho Regional School Finance Committee and provides a liaison between the Town and Chariho in matters of finance and budget. The Treasurer is head of the Finance Department and has overall responsibility for Department staff.

Tax Collector:

The Tax Collector is responsible for the accounting and collection of tax monies. To these ends the Tax Collector performs the following duties: updates computer database of tax information, prepares annual tax bills, sends out notices of delinquency, researches history and status of tax obligations, prepares and conducts annual tax sale, collects and deposits taxes, manages Tax Collector's Office.

Town Assessor:

The Assessor "... is responsible for maintaining the accuracy and integrity of the Town's property assessments." (BBS 1990). The Assessor's major responsibilities

include: conducting/overseeing of the town-wide property revaluation required every ten years; performing residential, commercial and industrial property appraisals on an ongoing basis as the need arises; formulating assessments; updating maps and other property records; dealing with public on matters of appeal and exemption.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Finance Department:

- o Continued allocation of funds to pay for 1994 revaluation;
- o Possible need for additional part time bookkeeper (20 hours per week) to serve Town Treasurer;
- o Continued support of capital improvement programming efforts;

Planning

Inventory

Personnel:

Town Planner

1 Secretary/Clerk (shared with Recreation Department)

Facilities/Equipment:

Office space, office equipment, Town Hall

Responsibilities:

The Town Planner provides technical assistance in planning to town officials and commission/board members and provides principal staff support to the Planning Commission. The Planner reviews and analyzes proposals for subdivisions, commercial site plans, and zoning changes. The Planner is also responsible for review and comment/edit of planning related ordinances and planning documents such as this Comprehensive Plan. Liaison with other communities, and the state and federal government on planning issues is also the Planner's responsibility. Assists other boards in Commissions as necessary i.e. Conservation Commission, Housing Resources Board, CPCAC.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Planning Department:

- o Development of planner's database, including computer mapping capability;
- o Develop additional land use controls for development.

Recreation

Inventory

Personnel:

Director of Parks and Recreation
1 Secretary/Clerk (shared with Planning Department)
Part-time staff on as needed basis for special events
45 +/- summer staff (full and part-time)
1 year-round volunteer staff at Ninigret Park

Facilities/Equipment:

See Open Space and Recreation Element.

Responsibilities:

The Director of Parks and Recreation is responsible for the operation of Town park and recreation facilities, the maintenance of these facilities (along with the Public Works Department), and the development and implementation of recreational programs to meet local needs. See Open Space and Recreation Element.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Parks and Recreation Department (see Open Space and Recreation Element for more detail):

- o A joint community center / senior citizen center would greatly help to meet the community's need for public meeting/activity space;
- o More ballfields and tennis courts are needed to meet existing and projected demand;
- o Development of more programs to serve adolescents;
- o More staff, including a year-round assistant to the Director.

Public Works

Inventory

Personnel:

Director of Public Works
5 Highway Workers
5-7 OSCAR grant summer employees
1 Building and Grounds Worker
4 Landfill Workers

Facilities/Equipment:

Public Works Garage & Office (adjoining Town Hall)
Landfill Facility

Equipment - See Table 2.

Responsibilities:

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintenance of municipal roads, buildings and grounds, and for operation of the municipal landfill/recycling facility. Municipal road and bridge maintenance is described in detail in the Circulation Element of this Plan. Like many rural communities, Charlestown does not provide municipal water or sewer service.

The Director of Public Works manages the operation of the Department's divisions: Highways, Buildings and Grounds, and Sanitation. The Director formulates policy recommendations and identifies priorities relative to the services the Department provides. The Public Works Director interacts with the public, Town officials, and state authorities on matters ranging from road maintenance priorities to construction bid documents and capital budget programming.

Highway Division:

Approximately half of the Highway Division's budget is used for road construction activities. Most of this involves road surfacing and drainage improvements. These activities are primarily motivated by safety concerns. Other Division responsibilities include liquid sealing road surfaces, keeping roads clear (including winter plowing), and general maintenance. Principal issues involving road maintenance are:

- o acceptance of private roads into the municipal road system - criteria and cost impacts;
- o the relatively low number of road maintenance personnel given the miles of municipal roads in Charlestown;
- o the impact of postponing major road maintenance projects identified in the Capital Improvement Plan.

These and other issues are described in the Circulation Element of this Plan.

Buildings & Grounds Division: This Division is responsible for maintenance of the Town Hall/Police/Public Works facility and grounds. It also provides assistance to the Recreation Department in limited new construction and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities (see Open Space and Recreation Element).

Sanitation Division: The Town landfill and recycling facility is operated by the Sanitation Division at a 68 acre site off of Sandhill Road. The landfill is one of the few municipal landfills still operating in the state. The landfill is operated as a drop off facility; there is no municipal waste pick-up service. The landfill and recycling facility is considered a model in the state. The expected life of the landfill is approximately seven years (at capacity in 1998 +/-) under current operating conditions.

The Town has received grants related to composting and other recycling programs implemented at the facility. The voluntary recycling program has yielded a 20% reduction in the volume of waste landfilled. Currently the program recycles cardboard, newspaper, construction/demolition debris, mixed recyclables (glass, cans), copper, lead, aluminum, and all vegetative waste.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Public Works Department:

- o Additional staff and capital funds will be required to meet anticipated future road maintenance needs;
- o Implementation of a pavement management program is needed. This would require staff for field assessment and data input, as well as Town funding commitments;
- o Some major pieces of equipment need to be covered;
- o Salt/sand storage pile needs to be covered;
- o An engineering division within the Department is a potential need in the future;
- o An additional two person backhoe crew would help to maintain the current level of service in the future;
- o A solid waste management study needs to be conducted in order to identify reasonable disposal/recycling alternatives in the future, in anticipation of the landfill reaching its capacity.

Public Safety

Inventory

Personnel:

Police:

- Police Chief
- Lieutenant
- 3 Sergeants
- 10 Patrol Officers
- 4 part-time summer assistants
- 4 Civil Dispatchers
- 1 Secretary/Records Clerk

Building Official:

- Building Official
- 1 part-time field inspector on as-needed basis (approximately 400 hours per year)
- Secretary/Clerk

Other:

- Harbor Master
- Animal Control Officer

Facilities/Equipment:

Police:

- Office and jail space at Town Hall
- 5 marked and 2 unmarked police cruisers
- 2 four-wheel drive vehicles
- radio equipment including 2 base stations
- 8 computer terminals
- Miscellaneous police equipment (guns, training materials, etc.)

Building Official:

- Office space, equipment, Town Hall
- Building Official's vehicle

Responsibilities:

The Police Chief has overall responsibility for the operation of the Police Department. The Chief formulates department policies and procedures and is responsible for staff training and work assignments. The Chief prepares long and short term plans for the Department including capital budget programming. The Department interacts closely with other law enforcement authorities at the local, state and federal level. The Department takes an active role in investigation, apprehension and prosecution.

The Police Department receives approximately 250 to 300 calls for service between Labor Day and June 15. During the summer months, June 15 to Labor Day, the Department receives approximately 300 to 575 calls. Data on calls for services have been computerized since August 1990, thus developing a useful database for analyzing service requirements. Calls for service have increased in recent years and adult arrests have increased. These include a greater percentage of arrests for felonies. Also, traffic accidents appeared to have decreased in recent years, perhaps as a result of a greater level of traffic enforcement.

The Police Department operates out of a new station constructed as part of the 1989 Town Hall renovations and expansion. However, the expansion of the police facilities was done without study of police space needs. There is currently no room for expansion of facilities. Cellblocks do not meet state specifications. There is also no room for confidential interviews. Some expansion of these facilities may be required during the 20 year planning period but probably not in the immediate future.

Police Department has experienced a reduction in the number of officers since 1990. In April of that year there were 17 officers, now there are 15. Some officers left the department but were not replaced. The Chief had projected a need for 19 officers (in addition to the Chief) for staffing in 1992. However, he feels that the 16 officers and Chief's position currently approved would serve the town adequately at this time. Note that several of those 16 positions remain vacant at this time.

The Chief would like four officers to be on duty at any time in Charlestown. Currently, two officers cover the town for 30 to 40 percent of the time (at night). This does not provide adequate coverage in situations where more than one call is being responded to, and one of the calls requires back-up. Also, with the increase in crime associated with population growth and development, the chief believes a detective may be needed in the near future for follow-up investigative work.

Another potential problem is the recent decision by the State of Rhode Island DEM not to provide park police at Burlingame State Park in Charlestown, or the camping areas along Charlestown beach. The additional burden of providing police protection to Burlingame State Park visitors could reduce the protection offered to Charlestown residents.

Building Official:

The Building Official's chief responsibilities include enforcement of the building code, zoning regulations, subdivision regulations and minimum housing code. Computer equipment has recently been installed in the Building Official's office, allowing permit and other building activity data to be tracked in the future. Fees generated by building permits and other licenses generate more income than is expended by the Building Official's operations. This provides a surplus of revenue during high building (growth) years and a break even situation during periods of slow growth. The Building Official has a good enforcement record, with no violations of the building code in recent years. Enforcement of the zoning code is sometimes a lengthy process due to litigation (Charlestown does not have a municipal court to settle such matters);

The Building Official is also responsible for ensuring that individuals seeking a building permit also have applicable state permits, for example a CRMC Assent, or ISDS Permit. This is particularly important in the coastal areas generally south of Route 1 where seasonal conversion (conversion of summer homes to year round use) and building conditions are often constrained by ISDS requirements, and/or CRMC requirements;

Another key role of the building official is the interpretation of the official zoning map. Currently there is only one such map and it lacks certain detail, including dimensions. Such additional detail would be very useful for the determination of zoned boundaries.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to the Public Safety Department:

Police:

- o Current police officer staffing is lower than that authorized, due to several vacant positions. Staffing needs as projected by the Department also show two additional police officers as being needed at this time in addition to the currently authorized staff level;
- o Additional space is needed in order to bring cellblocks up to state specifications (provide for separate male/female detention) and to provide private rooms for confidential interviews.

Building Official:

- o A large scale reproducible zoning map is needed. The map should have dimensions shown on it and zoning boundaries should tie into the assessor's plat map.
- o Needed changes to the zoning ordinance identified by the Building Official include:
 - A planned business zone is not needed, however different types of business use zones should be identified. These should be limited in size and should include zones for different types of business, for example, convenience market zones;
 - The amount of business zoned land should be reduced;
 - Spot commercial/industrial zones should be eliminated;
 - The large industrial zone is unrealistic;
 - Five acre zoning appears excessive in some instances.

Public Welfare

Inventory

Personnel:

Public Welfare Director (part time)

Facilities/Equipment:

Part time use of office space, equipment in both Town Hall and (primarily) the RI Department of Human Services (DHS) regional office in Westerly

Responsibilities:

The Public Welfare Director acts as a liaison between citizens, the Town and the state with regard to general public assistance (GPA). This work includes signing the GPA payroll, coordinating with the Town Treasurer, and making referrals to various human services agencies. The Town Emergency Fund and the Charlestown Emergency Food Fund are administered by the Public Welfare Director and Town Treasurer;

According to the Public Welfare Director, the demand on public welfare services has been relatively constant in recent years. The number of individuals or families in Charlestown receiving GPA at any given time is about fifteen. Disability is the leading factor qualifying these people for GPA. Another fifty or so families in Charlestown are recipients of Assistance for Families, Children and Dependents (AFCD). Individuals or families receiving GPA or AFCD also receive state social worker assistance through DHS. The Director receives anywhere from 0 to 20 calls per month regarding assistance. Calls for assistance are primarily from Charlestown residents, but also can include people living in Burlingame State Park;

The Town Emergency Fund is taxpayer funded through the General Fund and currently totals \$3,000. This fund is earmarked for situations of dire need involving Charlestown residents. The Charlestown Emergency Food Fund is funded through private donation and totals approximately \$1,000.

Needs

- o Affordable housing is needed for both the young and the old (see Housing Element).
- o Better options for mass transit or para transit are needed, especially with the trend for greater regionalization of human services programs (see Circulation Element).

Fire Protection

Inventory

Fire protection is provided to Charlestown residences and businesses by several different privately operated Fire Districts. They are funded through Fire District taxes. Fire station locations and District boundaries are shown in Figure 2. Most of the Town is served by the Charlestown Fire District, operating out of stations in Shannock and Cross Mills. A third station belongs to the Dunns Corner Fire District and is located on Route 1 near East Beach Road. It serves southwestern Charlestown, including Quonochontaug. The northwest corner of town is served by the Alton Fire Company through an arrangement with the Charlestown Fire District.

The Charlestown Fire District is an all volunteer group with about fifty active members (the Chief and four engineers draw nominal salaries). Many of these volunteers have served between 10 and 30 years, thus providing a great depth of firefighting experience. Fire and rescue (ambulance) are tied into the same service which answers 911 calls. Volunteers are alerted with both sirens and "beepers" (pocket pagers). The District responded to 379 calls for service in 1990.

The Charlestown Fire District has a sound management approach to maintaining and improving service into the future. Their capital plan calls for the acquisition of one new truck every ten years. They maintain a high level of training through various programs, many of which are conducted in the station by the RI Fire Academy. Also, this District continues to be successful in the pursuit of grant monies for the acquisition of equipment.

The District is currently implementing a plan to move Station 1 from Shannock to a site at the junction of Routes 2 and 112. This will provide better access (quicker response time) to northern Charlestown. Site acquisition is underway now, and new building construction is planned for 1992 or 1993. The Charlestown Fire District is also pursuing the acquisition of a site on Kings Factory Road which is currently part of Burlingame Management Area. This site would provide superior access to northwestern Charlestown, an area remote from present fire station locations.

Needs

The Charlestown Fire District Chief has identified the following needs with regard to the provision of fire protection services.

- o Additional daytime help is sometimes needed, especially for structure fires. Before 3 PM there are only about five volunteers in Town who can respond to a given call. This is a common problem with volunteer emergency services in rural towns.
- o The Narragansett Indian Tribal lands have no current means of fire protection, nor any mutual aid agreement with a fire fighting company/district. Uncontrolled fires on these Tribal lands could threaten land and developments in Charlestown.

- o Public water service in the beach areas would increase the District's fire fighting capability in those areas.
- o The District is working with the Town Civil Defense Director to pursue a federal grant for a tank truck.
- o A number of different needs were identified regarding road access (discussed further in the Circulation Element):
 - A connecting road is needed between Route 2 and Kings Factory Road, and between Route 2 and Old Coach Road to provide access in the northern part of Town;
 - Cross connections are needed between Charlestown Beach Road and Cedar Road;
 - Charlestown Beach Road needs widening to alleviate poor access during summer congestion;
 - The railroad bridge in Shannock is posted for a 3 ton limit, far below the 16 ton weight of some fire trucks. This can lead to a 15 - 20 minute delay accessing the Biscuit City Road area. This limitation needs to be removed. RIDOT has said this bridge would be upgraded during 1991;
 - Many roads are very rough and cause delays in response time. These include numerous private dirt roads and several Town roads such as Buckeye Brook Road. This Town road was identified in the 1990 Capital Improvement Plan for upgrade in FY 93 and FY 94. Note, however, that a similar upgrade programmed for Old Coach Road was cut from the FY 92 budget, suggesting that other local road upgrades might also be deferred in the future.

Ambulance

Inventory

Local ambulance and rescue services are provided by Charlestown Ambulance Service, Inc., a private, volunteer organization. Other private ambulance companies from out of town also provide local service on occasion (Westerly Ambulance takes many calls originating out of Quonochontaug).

Charlestown Ambulance Service is funded through service subscriptions and individual service charges. Service subscriptions cost \$25 per year and entitle the holder (and family) to free ambulance service. There are about 300 subscribers in Town. Service users without a subscription pay a base rate of \$175 and any additional charges for expended supplies. Charlestown Ambulance also received a \$15,000 contribution from the Town which has been used for debt payments on the vehicles and buildings, and for training. The Town also provides support by allowing Charlestown Ambulance to purchase gasoline through the Town.

The Charlestown Ambulance Service has approximately 20 - 25 active members, including seven Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). However, only one EMT is typically available during the day. Approximately 90% are cardiac trained. The main goal in terms of personnel training is in the area of advanced life support.

Charlestown Ambulance operates out of headquarters on Old Post Road, just east of the Visitor Center. They operate two Ford MedTech E350 emergency response vehicles (1986 and 1989). Both vehicles have heart defibrillation equipment. Each truck is replaced every ten years (current vehicle cost is approximately \$50,000 or \$75,000 with financing). Vehicle replacement is the major financial cost incurred by the group. A new vehicle will be needed in 1998.

Charlestown Ambulance had 365 calls last year of which 325 were taken. About 65% of these occur during the day when volunteer help is least available. Approximately 70% of calls taken are non-subscribers, providing the major source of revenues. Charlestown Ambulance also responds to approximately 10 - 12 beach rescues per year.

Needs

The following needs have been identified with regard to ambulance services:

- o As with the Fire District, the Ambulance Service has difficulty maintaining a suitable number of trained volunteers during the daytime. Currently only one EMT is usually available during weekdays. This is an unacceptable situation in the long run. Two or more EMTs should be available, on call, at any time in Town;
- o Needs identified by the Charlestown Ambulance Service Chief which are related to traffic accidents (discussed in Circulation Element) include;
 - Route 1 from the Ambulance Station to the Westerly town line is dangerous due to turnarounds from high speed lane.
 - Dangerous intersections.

West Beach Road and Route 1
Narrow Lane and 1A
Schoolhouse Road and 1A

Library

Library services are provided by the Cross' Mills Public Library on Route 1A (Figure 2). Cross' Mills Public Library is a private corporation which receives funding through private donations and grants. The Town of Charlestown has made significant annual grants to the Library in recent years (FY 1992 grant to Library of \$97,185, or 84% of the total budgeted revenue).

The Cross' Mills Public Library offers a wide variety of library services. In addition to over 24,000 books the Library offers other materials (records, videos, cassettes), and numerous programs for people of all ages. Table 4 lists current statistics on the Library's programs and holdings. The Library is also part of the CLAN system of libraries and provides the public with inter-library loan and subject search services.

Table 4.

CROSS' MILLS PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND HOLDINGS FOR FY 1990

PROGRAMS:		
<u>Program Type</u>	<u>Number of Programs per Year</u>	<u>Annual Attendance</u>
Pre-School Story Hours	209	1,868
School-aged Story Hours	23	337
Other Children's Programs	122	1,758
Family Programs	11	595
Young Adult/Adult Programs	30	496
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total =	395	5,054

HOLDINGS:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Number</u>
Books - Adult	18,101
Books - Young Adult	1,927
Books - Juvenile	4,565
Periodicals	165
Video Cassettes	335
Filmstrips	150
Records	1,189
Audio Cassettes	318
Music Cassettes	43
Puzzles	235
Games	29
Hand Puppets	19

The Library is open to the public six days a week for a total of 30 hours per week. The annual head count (number of people entering the library) has risen from 9,290 in FY 1977 to 23,962 in FY 1990 - a 158% increase. Total annual circulation has similarly risen from 14,450 in FY 1975 to 46,564 in FY 1990 - a 222% increase. The demand for library services has obviously increased dramatically over recent years.

The growth in demand was one motivating reason for the expansion of the facility in 1985. The final renovations to the library basement have recently been completed, thus completing the major expansion project. According to the Director/Librarian, the facility may serve the Town's needs for another ten years before further expansion is necessary. Lot size and the location of the septic system and well will make it difficult to expand this library much more in the future.

Currently, the provision of library services is limited by the amount of staff time available to keep the library open. Additional staff could be brought on to extend the public hours and provide more service. Current library staffing is as follows:

- 1 Director/Librarian - 35 hours/week
- 4 Clerks, 2 @ 18 hours/week, 2 @ 15 hours/week
- 1 Children's Program Director - 15 hours/week
- 1 Custodial/Grounds/Maintenance Worker - 20 hours/week

In addition, 36 volunteers donated 1,512 hours of service to the library in FY 1990.

Needs

The following library service needs have been identified.

- o In 1968 the State Library System was formed. The founding legislation required that a private library be officially recognized by municipal ordinance as an official town library, in order for it to be accepted into the system. Apparently, such an ordinance was passed by the Town Council at that time, but the wording has never appeared in the municipal code. Technically, this official recognition should be codified.
- o The Cross' Mills Public Library is one of the important local focal points for Charlestown residents. Unlike most local libraries, this library is not a repository of major town documents such as reports, budgets, or meeting minutes. Official notices issued by the Town are not sent to the library for posting. Implementing such functions through Town - Library coordination would provide a valuable public service to the community.
- o This library has no direct computer link to the statewide CLAN system. Subject searches are currently forwarded to Westerly Public Library. However, state budget cutbacks may require Cross' Mills Public Library to conduct searches themselves, creating an additional staff burden.

- o The expanded Cross' Mills Public Library is adequately sized to meet community needs in the near future. In the long term, perhaps within ten years, additional facility space may be required. Further expansion on the present site is constrained by lot size/configuration, ISDS location, and well location.
- o The provision of library services is presently constrained by the staff hours available to keep the library open. Additional service could be provided by increasing staff. Given the rapidly increasing use of this library, expanding the hours of operation appears warranted. Staff needs identified by the Director/Librarian are:
 - 1 part time (20 hours/week) professional (MLS) to work on developing the children's (young adult/juvenile) collection and to help provide general reference services;
 - 1 additional part time clerk, or substantially expanded volunteer support.
- o The Cross' Mills Public Library is in an unusual situation with regard to funding: they are a private, non-business enterprise which is 80% - 90% funded by the Town. As a line item in the Town budget, this funding is by no means secure from potential spending cuts, even though this library has enjoyed widespread local support. The Town and Library need to evaluate this situation and the possibility of the library becoming a municipal entity.

Schools

Inventory

The Chariho Regional School District provides public education to Charlestown's children. The District also serves the adjoining communities of Richmond and Hopkinton (Charlestown - Richmond - Hopkinton = Chariho). The District was first formed in 1958 with the regionalization of high school grades. The Chariho Regional High School and Chariho Regional Vocational - Technical Facility were built on a site off of Hope Valley Road in Richmond, about two miles north of Charlestown's border with Richmond. In 1989 the Charlestown Elementary School (Figure 2), became part of the Chariho Regional School District. Chariho leases the school building from the Town of Charlestown for \$1 per year.

Chariho operates under special state legislation known as the Chariho Act. The Chariho Regional School District is administered by a school committee made up of representatives elected from the three communities. The number of members from each community is based on the community's population. Presently, the eleven member committee is composed of four Charlestown members, four Hopkinton members and three Richmond members. Charlestown members are elected at the November election and serve four year terms. The District's budget is formulated by the School Committee and School Finance Committee but it must be approved by the vote of member town residents at a public meeting.

Chariho is funded by each of the member communities in accordance with the number of students enrolled from each town. State educational assistance is given to the towns which in turn include the monies in their funding of Chariho.

The state encourages regionalization of educational facilities and services through an increased level of educational assistance to member communities. Approximately 4% of total costs are provided as a basic incentive, above the normal level of funding, plus an additional 2% for each grade which is regionalized. For Chariho, this amounts to an additional 18% funding bonus for regionalization. This amount will decrease each year, but will never fall below the 4% bonus.

Chariho's 1991-1992 budget is still being debated at this time. Rising school costs and associated increases in taxes in Richmond and Hopkinton have led voters to reject initial budget proposals as too expensive. Statewide data for the 1987-1988 school year indicate that per pupil costs at Chariho were higher than most other communities. Chariho's per pupil cost in 1987-88 was \$5,430, the third highest in the state after New Shoreham (\$6,927) and Newport (\$5,639). The statewide average in that school year was \$4,351.

Tables 5 and 6 provide data on Chariho Regional School District enrollments. Figure 3 depicts some of this data along with enrollment projections made by the District. As can be seen in Table 5, school enrollments are split relatively evenly between the three member communities. Table 6 shows the distribution of students between the different District schools, by grade.

Total enrollments dropped in the early 1980s but have rebounded in recent years as a result of regional population growth and the incorporation of Charlestown Elementary School into the District in 1989 (see Figure 3). Projected total enrollments, by grade for 1990-1991 and 1995-1996 (Figure 3) show the greatest increase in enrollments occurring in grades 6 through 12. Given existing space in the Middle School (built to serve 1,200), the Superintendent has indicated the need for additional space for fifth graders in the short-term (within five years) and perhaps a new Middle School in the long-term (5 - 20 years).

Needs

The following needs were identified by the Chariho Superintendent regarding the School District:

- o A detailed evaluation of school space expansion and utilization needs is needed for short- and long-term planning;
- o Additional fifth grade space is likely to be needed in the next few years;
- o A new Middle School may be needed in the long-term period (5 - 20 years). A new school would require redistricting the affected school population.

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF CHARIHO REGIONAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT ENROLLMENT DATA 1990Three Town Count

	<u>E</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>HS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Charlestown	455	289	215	959 (28.36%)
Richmond	519	352	281	1152 (34.06%)
Hopkinton	<u>518</u>	<u>386</u>	<u>367</u>	<u>1271</u> (37.58%)
Total	1492	1027	863	3382

Tuition Enrollment (all grades)

Narragansett	13
South Kingstown	23
Westerly	60
North Kingstown	2
Jamestown	<u>1</u>
	99

GRAND TOTAL

Elementary	1492
Middle School	1031
High School	<u>957</u>
	3481

Vocational-Technical Enrollment: 322

TABLE 6

CHARIHO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ENROLLMENT DATA BY GRADE
10/1/90
(Sections in parenthesis)

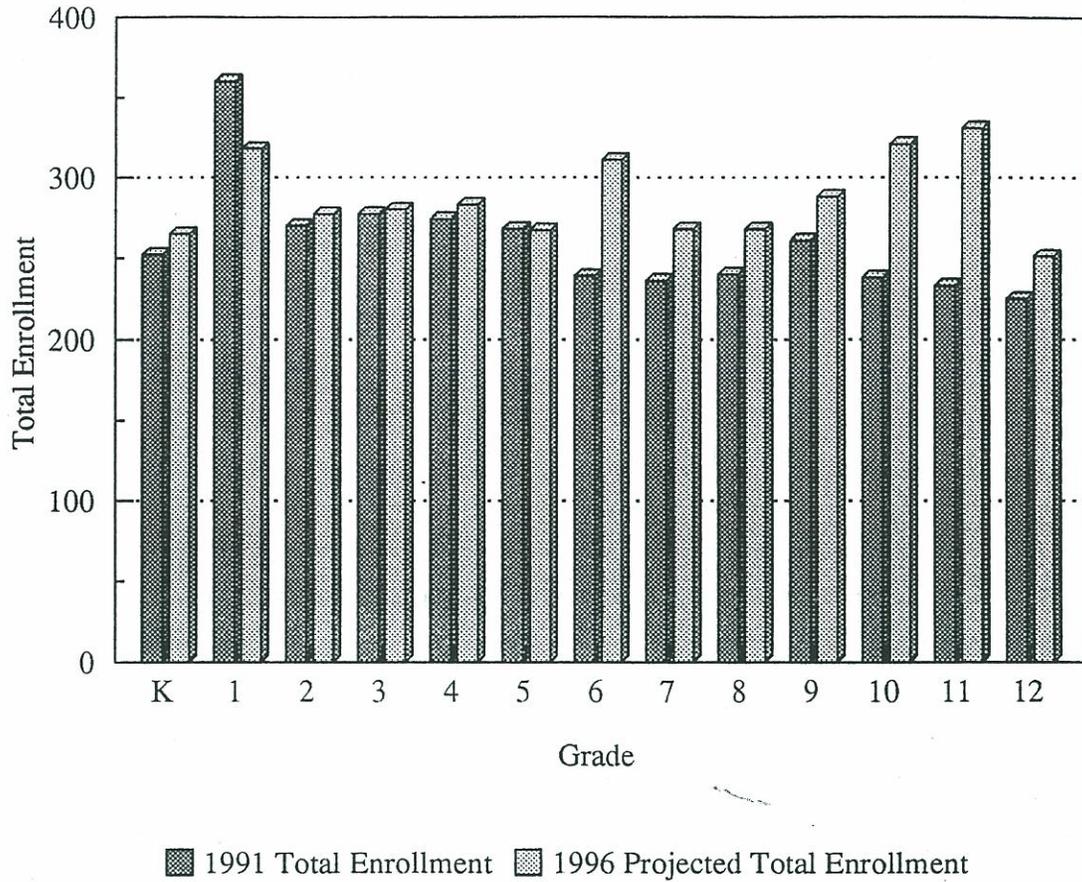
School	Self- Contained	Pre- School	K	T1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	Total			
														K-4 ()	Only		
Ashaway	7 (1)	5 (.5)	55 (3)	11 (1)	63 (3)	45 (2)	43 (2)	37 (2)	266 (13)								
Charlestown	15 (2)	0	74 (4)	15 (1)	95 (4)	88 (4)	81 (4)	87 (4)	455 (21)								
Hope Valley	8 (1)1	0	43 (2)	13 (1)	42 (2)	52 (2)	44 (2)	50 (2)	252 (11)								
Richmond	20 (2)	4 (.5)	80 (5)	12 (1)	109 (5)	85 (4)	109*5)	100 (4)	519 (24)								
Middle School	*49 (6)								268	239	236	240	1032				
High School	*25 (3)													261	238	233	225
TOTALS	124	9 (1)	252 (14) 10	51 (4) 13	309 (14) 22	270 (12) 23	277 (13) 21	274 (12) 23	1492 (69) 22	268 (11)	239 (10)	236 (10)	240 (10)	261 (10)	238	233	225
1989-90	125	9	292	53	279	272	267	281	1500								

* Included in Middle/High School Totals

SOURCE: Chariho Regional School District, 1991

1991 and Projected 1996 Total Enrollment

Chariho Regional School District



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin

1991 and Projected 1996 Total Enrollment Figure 4
 Chariho Regional School District

RECOMMENDATIONS / IMPLEMENTATION

Prioritized Recommendations

The following list of priorities has been identified through discussions with Town officials, CPCAC members, and through direct observation and analysis of existing and projected needs. In most cases these priorities must be addressed in both the short-term (next five years) and the long-term (5-20 years from now). The sections following this list of priorities present the recommendations in the context of the short-term and long-term implementation plans.

High Priorities

1. Maintain the high level of expertise which currently exists among municipal employees. This high level of expertise will help to ensure the cost-effective, successful implementation of other Plan recommendations.
2. Maintain and upgrade, when necessary, the level or amount of staff, facility space, and equipment required to maintain or improve the levels of service currently provided by the Town in order to meet the needs of a growing population.
3. Fund special studies in the short-run to address critical service/facility concerns:
 - Water resources management study to include both water supply and wastewater disposal components;
 - Landfill facility plan to address future needs, capacity and expansion potential for municipal solid waste disposal, material recycling, and septage treatment/disposal;
 - Hurricane damage impact study / contingency plan for coastal floodplain area;
 - Community Center feasibility study.
4. Evaluate whether to remain in the Chariho district based on the costs of remaining in the district, the costs of constructing and operating a new school, and the residents' goals for their educational system.
5. The Town should evaluate alternative sites for a new school in the town, should the need for new facilities be identified.

Moderate Priorities

6. Develop an understanding with the Narragansett Tribe of Indians regarding the role of police and fire protection on Tribal lands.
7. Support local fire, rescue, ambulance, library and other volunteer services to maintain these services at a reasonable cost to the community. Encourage and provide recognition for volunteerism in the

fire, rescue, ambulance service, library, Parks and Recreation Department activities, town boards and commissions, and other volunteer services.

Lower Priorities

8. Develop a pamphlet explaining municipal and other public services that are available to Charlestown residents. The pamphlet would be made available to various parties for distribution to the public, particularly new or prospective residents.

SHORT TERM (5 YEAR) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. Maintain high level of municipal employee expertise.

- Complete comprehensive wage survey.
- Institute salary adjustments to make salaries competitive with similar municipalities in the region.
- Prepare and institute a Town Personnel Ordinance.

Time Frame: 0-2 years for salary review and adjustments, on-going periodically afterward. 3-5 years for ordinance.

Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Town Solicitor, Town Council.

2. Maintain and upgrade staff, facilities, and equipment to meet needs of growing population.

- Additional staff are likely to be required in the short-term:

2 - 4 police officers

2 - 4 Public Works employees

2 EMTs for daytime ambulance duty

1 - 2 library workers

1 year round assistant - Parks and Recreation Department

Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Town Council, Department Heads

3. Fund special studies in the short-run to address critical service/facility concerns:

- Water resources management study to include both water supply and wastewater disposal components. A public participation program should be implemented during the conduct of this study.

Water Supply Component:

- Evaluate the need for public water service with respect to water supply contamination, water use, and economic development;
- Evaluate the available alternative means of providing public water service, and alternative service areas with associated costs to the Town and the potential water users;
- Evaluate the impact of providing public water on the development of currently undevelopable lots, and water usage rates;
- Identify critical groundwater resource protection areas, existing levels of protection, need for additional protection and alternative strategies for protection.
- Develop a water conservation program with emphasis on limiting water use (and wastewater disposal) in critical resource areas (inland and coastal ponds).

Wastewater Disposal Component:

- Collect and collate existing water quality data into a computer database;
- Use database, public participation program, aerial photography, interviews and field reconnaissance to identify potential problem areas;
- Develop and implement a lot by lot evaluation technique to pinpoint and document failing septic systems (ISDSs);
- Develop recommendations for implementation of an ISDS rehabilitation/reconstruction program;
- Develop and evaluate alternatives for septage disposal;
- Develop alternative strategies/designs to address problems in areas where ISDS upgrade cannot be done effectively, investigate small scale "cluster" type solutions;
- Develop and evaluate alternative funding mechanisms to implement plan;

Time Frame

- **Studies:** 0-3 years
- **Implementation:** 3-4 years or earlier as studies are complete.

Responsible Parties:

- **Studies:** Town Planner, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Building Official, Department of Public Works Director, Town Administrator. Outside assistance from student interns or studio classes, volunteers, or private firms is required.

- **Implementation:** Town Planner, Building Official, Department of Public Works Director, Town Administrator, Town Solicitor, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Town Council.

Resources Needed

- **Studies:** Funding for private firm/student interns to perform studies.

Staff/intern time to compile existing water quality information.

Staff time to direct and review studies.

- **Implementation:** Staff/Board/Commission time for development, review of ordinance.

Staff time to administer/enforce ordinance

Physical improvements/upgrades to septic systems to be paid for by homeowners or assessed on a watershed basis.

Estimated Capital Costs (studies and implementation): \$15,000-\$60,000

- Landfill facility plan to address future needs, capacity and expansion potential for municipal solid waste disposal, material recycling, and septage treatment/disposal.

- Evaluate population and waste generation/composition data to develop a basis of future waste generation volumes by type of waste material.

- Evaluate current federal, state and local regulations pertaining to waste disposal and recycling facilities.

- Develop alternative waste management strategies and associated costs including continued use/expansion at the existing site, potential new facility sites in Town, transfer station options in combination with out of town disposal options.

- Hurricane damage impact study / contingency plan for coastal floodplain area.

- Determine seasonal versus year-round status of residences in the coastal floodplain, and associated valuation.

- Identify likely extent of property damage/loss under different sets of assumptions regarding storm intensity, duration, tidal stage, and coastal submergence.

- Evaluate likelihood of redevelopment after hurricane in light of existing local, state and federal regulations.

- Evaluate possible impacts of hurricane damage on short and long-term municipal property tax revenues.

- Community Center feasibility study.

- Develop public participation program.

- Identify various potential user groups and associated needs.
- Develop site suitability criteria and apply townwide in order to identify alternative suitable sites.
- Comparatively evaluate alternative sites and select a recommended option.
- Develop alternative conceptual facility designs and make recommendations based on the ability of the facility to meet community needs, and facility development costs.

Time Frame: 0-5 years

Responsible Parties: Landfill plan - Department of Public Works Director; Hurricane study - Police Chief, Town Administrator; School study - School committee; Community Center study - Parks and Recreation Department Director. Each study may require input from citizens, other department heads, boards and commissions.

Estimated Capital Costs:

Landfill plan - \$20,000-30,000

Hurricane study - \$5,000-10,000

Community center study - \$10,000-20,000

4. **The town should evaluate whether to remain in the Chariho district** based on the costs of remaining in the district, the costs of constructing and operating a new school, and the residents' goals for their educational system.

Time Frame: 0-1 year

Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Tax Assessor, Department of Public Works Director, Town Council, School Committee members, voters.

Estimated Capital Costs: \$0-\$5,000

5. **The Town should evaluate alternative sites for a new school in the town, should the need for new facilities be identified.**

-Additional facility space is likely to be needed in the short-term for fifth grade students or early elementary students.

Time frame: 0-5 years

Responsible Parties: Chariho School Department; if Charlestown withdraws from District, the Town Administrator, Department Heads, Town Council and Planning Commission would be involved, possibly with outside assistance from a private firm.

Estimated Capital Costs: \$0-\$10,000

- 6. Support local volunteer services to maintain these services at a reasonable cost to the community. Encourage and provide recognition for volunteerism in the fire, rescue and ambulance services, library, Chamber of Commerce, Parks and Recreation Department activities, town boards and commissions, and other volunteer services.**

- Evaluate options for bringing more EMTs into daytime service (consider Town paid EMTs for day shift, or additional funding of private service to cover paid daytime EMTs).

- Promote volunteerism through Town services pamphlet, community outreach, and incentives to municipal employees.

Responsible Parties: Town Department heads, Town Council, Conservation Commission, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce.

- 7. Develop an understanding with the Narragansett Tribe of Indians regarding the role of police and fire protection on Tribal lands.**

- initiate a dialog with Tribal leaders to work out any mutual assistance agreements, if agreeable to both parties.

Responsible Parties: Town Administrator, Department heads, Town Council, volunteer fire and rescue service Chiefs, Tribe officials.

- 8. Develop public services pamphlet.**

- Prepare comprehensive list of municipal and other public services, with a description of services/facilities available, and contact information.

- Prepare map and graphics as applicable.

- Distribute to local public service organizations, businesses, and make available at Town Hall.

LONG TERM (20 YEAR) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. Maintain the high level of expertise which currently exists among municipal employees.
 - Periodically evaluate salaries, benefits and work conditions with respect to recommended Personnel Ordinance and community needs.
2. Maintain and upgrade, when necessary, the level or amount of staff, facility space, and equipment required to maintain or improve the levels of service currently provided by the Town in order to meet the needs of a growing population.
 - Evaluate service/facility needs every five years with update of Comprehensive Plan.
 - Long-term staff levels are likely to need to be increased in most areas of Town government, particularly in the Public Safety, Public Works, and Recreation Departments.
 - The Town may wish to incorporate the Cross' Mills Public Library into municipal government during this period. Library expansion may become necessary during this period as well.
 - In the long-term, additional space may be necessary for the Public Safety Department and the Cross' Mills Public Library.
3. Implement the recommendations of special studies to address critical service/facility concerns.
 - Water resources management: the following are possible actions to be implemented in the long-term to implement the findings of the water resources study:
 - public water supply protection zoning;
 - financial assistance/incentives for ISDS upgrade;
 - water conservation program in coastal areas;
 - ongoing ISDS and ambient water quality monitoring.
 - Landfill: additional solid waste disposal capacity or transfer options will need to be implemented in the 5 - 20 year time frame.
 - Hurricane damage impact study / contingency plan: update as appropriate.
 - Community Center feasibility study: a site should be selected and developed for a community center in this time frame.
4. Evaluate whether to remain in the Chariho district based on the costs of remaining in the district, the costs of constructing and operating a new school, and the residents' goals for their educational system.

- Continue to review the town's educational goals and their attainment.
5. The Town should evaluate alternative sites for a new school in the town, should the need for new facilities be identified.
 - Continue to monitor projected school enrollments using birth records, building permit records, and school department projections. This function would be carried out by town department heads or Chariho, depending on whether the town remains in the regional school district.
 6. Provide additional support of local volunteer ambulance services: the Town may have to decide to incorporate the ambulance service into municipal government or to use for-profit ambulance services.