

## **7.0 SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

This chapter addresses all local government and other public services and facilities related to public safety, education, community services and utilities. Some of the services that Tiverton residents enjoy are funded by the annual real estate tax. These include police, fire, schools, libraries and other community services. Others are paid by the recipient, as in public water service and sewers. All affect the public health, safety and welfare of Tiverton's citizens. The locations of municipal and community buildings are shown in Figure 7-1.

### **7.1 Public Safety**

#### **Police Department**

Law enforcement and protection of persons and property is provided by the Police Department's 31-member enforcement team, supplemented by 12 civilian employees, including the animal control officer. Although not directly under the jurisdiction of the Police Department, boating safety enforcement is provided by the part-time harbormaster, with assistance from a number of part-time (primarily volunteer) harbor patrol officers, as well as state fish and game officers. The Police Department operates a twenty-four hour patrol with three officers per shift. Average response time to an emergency dispatched call is approximately four minutes throughout town.

Police Department headquarters are located south of Route 24 at Fish Road, in a building that is in need of infrastructure upgrades and lacks adequate storage space for police records. Expansion by approximately 2,500 square feet is needed to provide storage space and a new locker room and bathroom. A previous grant enabled the department to upgrade its computer system, and in 2004, the communications system was centralized and enhanced to accommodate all emergency services; police, fire, ambulance and harbormaster.

The Police Department is committed to the concept of community policing and community involvement. It plans to continue its ongoing drug and alcohol education program in the schools, and to assist in neighborhood watch programs. Federal, state, and homeland security grants are sought, as is donated equipment.

#### **Fire Department**

As of 2015, the Fire Department is operating its three fire stations (#2, 3 & 4) with a staff of 27 full-time firefighters, plus the Fire Marshall, Fire Chief and a civilian secretary. The town no longer has the assistance of volunteer firefighters.

The station buildings are in need of long-term repair and maintenance, and many town residents and officials feel a new fire station is needed, preferably as part of a combined police and fire complex. An ideal location would allow for the consolidation of two, or perhaps all three, of the town's existing fire stations (see Figure 7-1), while ensuring that industry-accepted safe response times recommended by the Insurance Services Office and the National Fire Protection Association can be met. Station #2 (north Tiverton), a 50-year old building that cannot accommodate modern fire apparatus, and Station #3 (Stafford Road), the old communication building, are both intended

to be closed permanently. Station #4 (East Road), which is also an old building and without rear access for vehicles, would be maintained as a truck and ambulance storage facility.

The Fire Department also manages the emergency rescue service, which consists of two rescue vehicles. The dispatching system put into place for the Police and Fire Departments in 2004, as well as a state-wide 911 system which identifies the locations of 911 calls, have increased both departments' efficiency in responding to emergencies. The town currently bills for rescue service.

### **Emergency Management**

Since the appointment by the Town Council in 2008 of two volunteer deputy directors of emergency management, significant progress has been made in formalizing Tiverton's emergency management infrastructure, policies and procedures. This includes the development of a formal emergency operations plan, the implementation of a Medical Emergency Distribution System plan and the updating and maintenance of important emergency management plans such as those pertaining to dams and hazard mitigation.

Future efforts should be focused on updating existing policies and procedures as the need arises and further preparing the town for any potential disaster event. Tiverton should continue to pursue designation as a 'Storm Ready' community – a program sponsored by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

## **7.2 Schools**

Tiverton's School District covers the incorporated bounds of the town. There are three operating elementary schools: Pocasset, Fort Barton and Ranger; the Tiverton Middle School; and the Tiverton High School. In 2015, the School Department consisted of 178 teachers and 62 non-certified support staff. Although it varies somewhat from year to year, the educational system accounts for about two-thirds of the Tiverton annual budget.

For the 2014-2015 school year, there were 1,917 students enrolled in grades PK-12. In the 2015-2016 school year, the enrollment is expected to be 1,875. This school year is also the first academic year for all-day kindergarten.

### **Academic Services**

Tiverton provides special education services through a regional collaborative program that includes students from Little Compton and Middletown. This allows the town to contain costs associated with providing services to students with special needs. Federal funds, which offset a portion of these costs, are allocated on a per capita basis. When ready, students are integrated into the regular classrooms.

### **Facilities Renovations**

In 2013, the School Committee approved a Facilities Study that was conducted by RGB Architects. The study reviewed the condition of all five schools and presented recommendations that prioritize

the order in which renovations should occur. The School Committee has formed a Facilities Subcommittee which will be responsible for analyzing the findings and recommendations. The subcommittee will then make its own recommendations to the School Committee regarding a timeline for conducting the necessary renovations. The School Committee will review the subcommittee’s recommendations and develop a timetable for implementing the recommendations.

**Academic Ratings**

The RI Department of Education annually evaluates all public schools in the state. Table 7-1 shows the 2014 ratings. In September, 2014, Fort Barton School was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School for 2014.

**TABLE 7-1: RI Department of Education Ratings 2014**

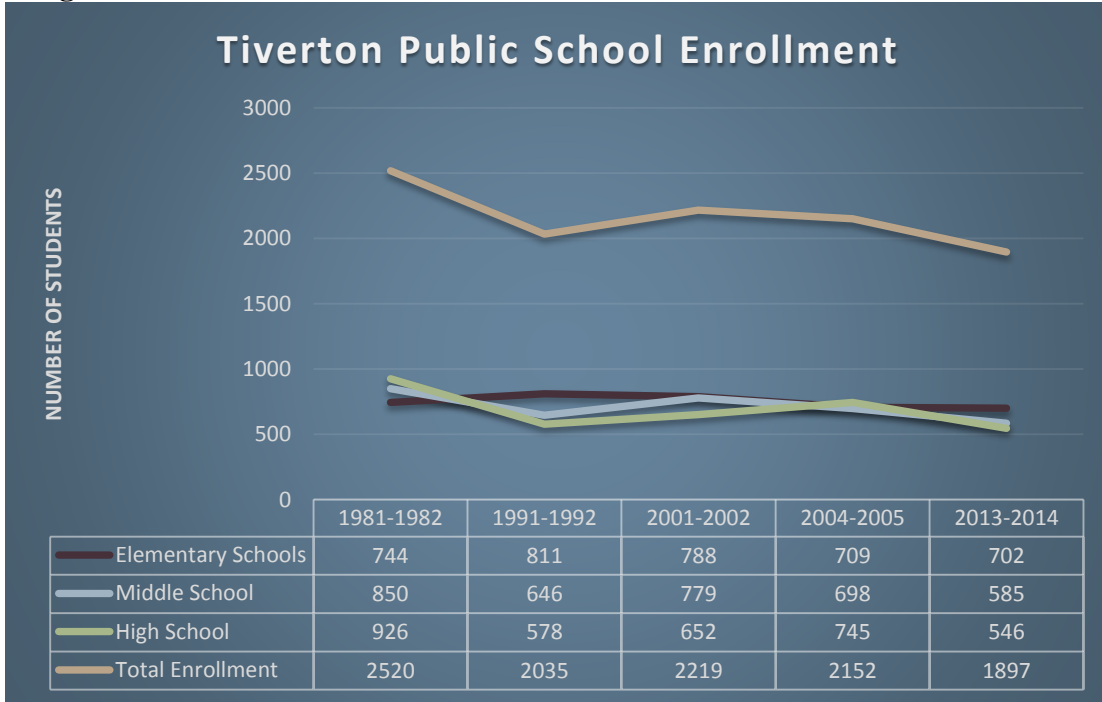
School	Rating
Pocasset	Typical
Fort Barton	Commended
Ranger	Typical
Tiverton Middle School	Typical
Tiverton High School	Leading

**Finance and Administration**

The School Committee, as vested by law, has the responsibility to determine expenditures for the school system. An annual budget is prepared, and a detailed review is undertaken by the town’s Budget Committee, before presentation at the Financial Town Referendum, held in May of each year. As required by the state, the School Committee supplies the RI Department of Education with a five-year capital budgeting plan.

In 2007, the Town Council adopted a ‘Development Impact Fee’ charged to purchasers of new houses, with an exemption for one-bedroom homes, age-restricted homes and certain affordable units. The fee offsets the future cost of educating children in that new household. The fee has remained at \$2,980 since 2007. In the fiscal year that began on July 1, 2014 and ended June 30, 2015, the fee raised \$59,600 on the sale of 20 new houses. The revenue goes into a dedicated account to be used exclusively for capital improvements on school buildings.

**Figure 7-a:** Tiverton Public School Enrollment



\*Capacity Note: Elementary Schools =861 Students Total or 287 per school per: 2014 letter to Planning Board from Superintendent Rearick Middle & High Schools = 850 Students each per 2007 Needs Assessment / Impact Fee Ordinance Total Estimated System Capacity = 2,561 Students

### 7.3 Library Services

Tiverton's library system consists of a new Tiverton Public Library, opened in June of 2015, and the second-oldest library in Rhode Island; the historic Union Public Library at Tiverton Four Corners.

The new library, near Bliss Four Corners, provides opportunities for an enormous expansion of educational and enrichment activities for the people of Tiverton. With its meeting rooms of various sizes, it offers plenty of space for quiet study and group gatherings.



The Trustees are appointed by the Town Council as legal guardians and custodians of the library to ensure its proper care, staffing, and governance. The Library Director is hired by the Trustees to oversee the daily running of the facility, hires staff, and works with the Trustees on budgeting.

There are two non-profit organizations that help with library services. The Tiverton Library Foundation provides supplemental financial assistance. The Friends of Tiverton Libraries raises funds for library programming and promotes library services in the community.

The Union Public Library is an active branch of the town library system, offering its services with small library charm to customers in the southern part of town. The quaint building has been part of the Tiverton Four Corners scene for almost two hundred years. It is owned and maintained by the Union Public Library Association and leased to the Library Board of Trustees.

The Essex Library building is currently being considered for future uses or sale.

#### **7.4 Town Hall**

The Tiverton Town Hall, located at 343 Highland Road, is the center for town administration, including the offices of the Town Administrator, Tax Assessor, Tax Collector, Building Official, Town Treasurer, Town Planner, Administrative Officer of the Planning Board and Town Clerk, as well as for town records storage. It also serves as the courtroom for sessions of the Municipal and Probate Courts.

Although renovations in 1999 have made the Town Hall more useable, it still lacks office space and climate control and fireproof storage for archival records. Many public meetings of the Town Council, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Review are crowded, often approaching the permissible occupancy of Town Hall. Extensive renovations to Town Hall are needed to meet future space, climate control and communications needs.

#### **7.5 Senior Center**

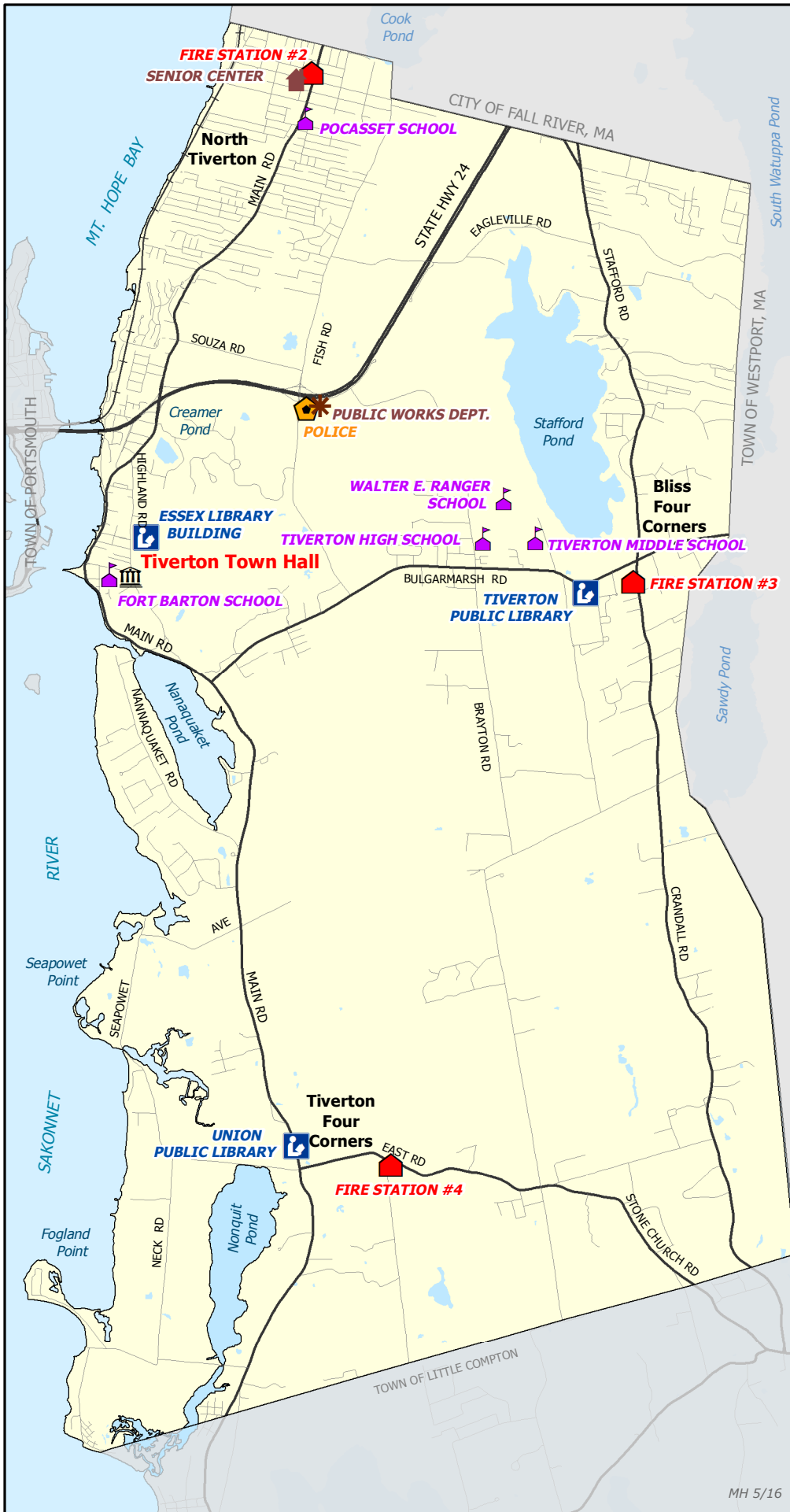
The Senior Center was established in 1978 in the former Barker School on Canonicus Street in northern Tiverton. It currently services more than 1000 members of the community aged 55 and over on a regular basis. With one full-time and four part-time employees and eighty volunteers, the kitchen, meal site, delivery of meals and activities are offered weekdays year-round. The building is also used for public meetings or events on an as needed basis.

Health and wellness programs, tax and financial education and assistance information, door to door bus service for local shopping trips, seasonal programs and daily activities for socialization are just some of the established benefits offered to the community.

The members also involved in community outreach utilizing the AARP tax assistance programs, safe driving instruction classes, fundraising through knitting projects to benefit the Star Kids Scholarship program and the Senior Center Chorus which entertains at local nursing homes and adult day care facilities. The most recent year had over 33,000 client participation activities, programs and services. It is rapidly outgrowing its facility and limiting the opportunity for new class and program offerings.

Three annual grants help support the efforts of the Center in addition to a modest membership fee; however, the bulk of the funding for the building and staff is through local taxes. The services and programs offered by the Center are a valuable resource for a growing portion of the population and should continue to be supported.





- TOWN HALL
- POLICE
- FIRE STATION
- PUBLIC SCHOOL
- LIBRARY
- PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY
- COMMUNITY BUILDING

- PONDS, OPEN WATER
- MAJOR ROAD
- MINOR ROAD
- RAILWAY

Source: RIGIS and Town of Tiverton



Disclaimer: This map is not the product of a Professional Land Survey. It was created by Mapping and Planning Services for general reference, informational, planning and guidance use, and is not a legally authoritative source as to the location of natural or manmade features. Proper interpretation of this map may require the assistance of appropriate professional services. The Town of Tiverton or MPS makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the spatial accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currentness of this map.

TIVERTON COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN  
**Figure 7-1**  
**COMMUNITY FACILITIES**



MH 5/16

## 7.6 Pocasset Hill Cemetery

Tiverton has one town-owned cemetery, Pocasset Hill Cemetery, which is available to all town residents for who choose to purchase a burial plot. The operation and management of this cemetery is the responsibility of the Tiverton Cemetery Commission, whose members are appointed by the Town Council. The Cemetery Commission is also responsible for securing additional land to meet the longer-term burial needs of the town's population.



## 7.7 Drinking Water Utilities

Although all of south Tiverton and sparsely populated areas in the north derive their potable water from wells, most homes and businesses in the more densely settled northwest portion of town are connected to public water. Two water systems serve the Town; the Stone Bridge Fire District and the North Tiverton Fire District, both of which were originally established as volunteer firefighting organizations.

The Stone Bridge Fire District, which draws water from Stafford Pond, serves an L-shaped area extending from Stafford Pond west across Bulgarmarsh Road and north along Main Road to Souza Road. It maintains a storage capacity of 1 million gallons per day in two tanks, one with a capacity of 1 million gallons and the second with 0.5 million gallons. It serves approximately 1,070 households. Because the City of Fall River owns the overflow water rights to Stafford Pond (water coming over the north shore dam and flowing into Sucker Brook which is a tributary of Fall River's South Watuppa Pond), Stone Bridge must pay Fall River a contractual fee for drawing upon any overflow water. The district also has an emergency interconnection with the Town of Portsmouth, which can provide Aquidneck Island with emergency water of up to 175,000 gallons per day.

The North Tiverton Fire District also purchases water from the City of Fall River, drawing from North Watuppa Pond, and from the Stone Bridge Fire District for use of Stafford Pond water. This district presently serves nearly 3,000 households, and would potentially serve new developments east of Stafford Pond and south of Bulgarmarsh Road.

Both districts maintain their own distribution system. As required by the Rhode Island Water Resources Board, both districts update their management plans every five years. Stafford Pond, and Nonquit Pond in south Tiverton, which is part of the City of Newport's water supply system



and could someday provide drinking water to Tiverton residents, are both protected by means of a Watershed Protection Overlay District (see Chapter 5).

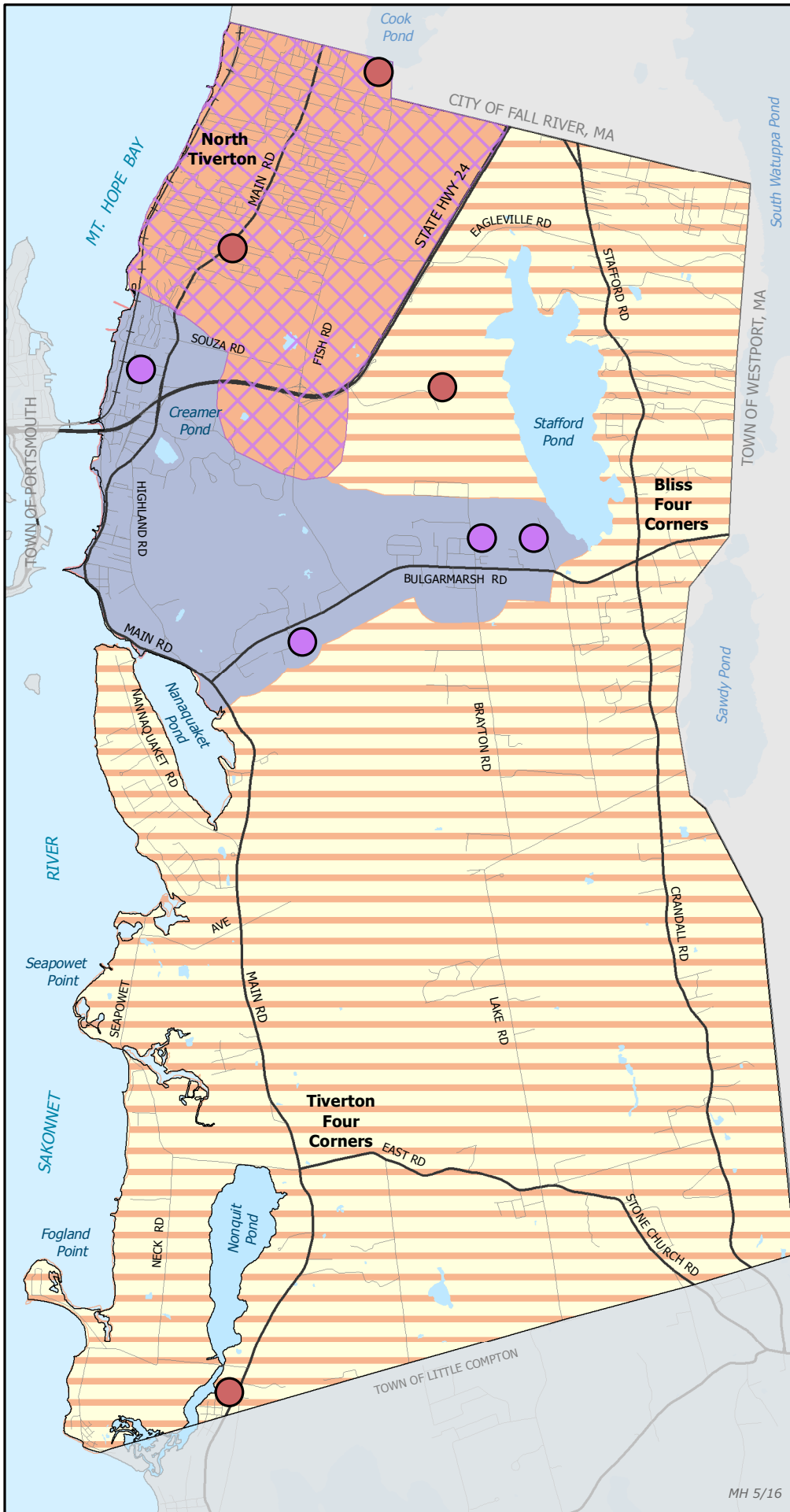
Efforts have begun to address the maintenance and upgrading of septic systems in the Stafford Pond Watershed (see Wastewater Management below). Both the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have been active in providing funds to mitigate agricultural and stormwater run-off. The Tiverton Conservation Commission has also published a guide for landowners in the Stafford Pond watershed. High levels of phosphorus and nitrogen pose water quality challenges for both Stafford and Nonquit Ponds. For several years, RIDEM has managed a ‘Total Maximum Loading Program’ (TMDL) - setting limits on the daily discharge of pollutants into water bodies - for Stafford Pond. A TMDL is being developed for Nonquit Pond.

The large increase in the number of homes and other buildings raises the issue of potable water availability. Neither water district has definitive data on how much water could be withdrawn from Stafford Pond or purchased from Fall River to serve new subdivisions and other high volume water consumers such as hotels, casinos and restaurants. A peer-reviewed study should be undertaken to determine how much and what kind of future development can be planned before a limit is reached on affordable potable water for all residents and businesses.

The fact that only about 4,000 households and other buildings are served by the two districts raises the question of consolidation. A merging of the two into a single Tiverton water district might result in cost savings to consumers, an integrated distribution system and an end to the occasional disputes that arise between the existing districts.



*The protection of the water quality of Stafford Pond is a critical issue.*



**WATER DISTRICTS**

- STONE BRIDGE FIRE DISTRICT
- NORTH TIVERTON FIRE DISTRICT
- EXPANSION RIGHTS AREA for NORTH TIVERTON FIRE DISTRICT

**STONE BRIDGE FIRE DISTRICT HIGH WATER USERS**

- NORTH TIVERTON FIRE DISTRICT
- OTHER HIGH USER LOCATIONS

**NORTH TIVERTON FIRE DISTRICT HIGH WATER USERS**

- HIGH USER LOCATIONS

- PONDS, OPEN WATER
- MAJOR ROAD
- MINOR ROAD
- RAILWAY

Source: RIGIS and Tiverton Planning Department (2014), North Tiverton Fire District (2014) and Stone Bridge Fire Districts (2014) for the High Water Users.



Disclaimer: This map is not the product of a Professional Land Survey. It was created by Mapping and Planning Services for general reference, informational, planning and guidance use, and is not a legally authoritative source as to the location of natural or manmade features. Proper interpretation of this map may require the assistance of appropriate professional services. The Town of Tiverton or MPS makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the spatial accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currentness of this map.

TIVERTON COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN



**Figure 7-2  
WATER DISTRICTS &  
HIGH WATER USERS**

MH 5/16

## **7.8 Wastewater Management**

### **On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS)**

Currently it is estimated that 94% of the homes and businesses in Tiverton rely on on-site sewage disposal systems, with an estimated 6,400 separate septic systems, half built before 1970, which implies outdated design concepts. Modern OWTSs work very well even in poor soil conditions provided that they are monitored to insure that the ground water does not become contaminated.

According to soil analyses, 80% of Tiverton's land area is problematic for septic systems; the soils are dense, slowly permeable, and have an underlying restrictive layer of "hardpan" and seasonal high water table.

South of Bulgarmarsh Road, almost all households maintain both individual wells and septic systems. Given the low housing density of the area, and land areas sufficient for adequate septic systems, even in areas of questionable drainage, sewerage expansion is not necessary. It is also unlikely that public drinking water service will be extended to this region.

An On-site Wastewater Management Program was adopted in July 2006 by the Town Council to insure that our precious water resources do not become contaminated from failing OWTSs. This Plan, authorized by the Tiverton On-site Wastewater Management Ordinance, calls for the inspection and upgrading of OWTSs, with priority given to systems near water bodies and other ecologically fragile areas.

On July 22, 2015, Governor Raimondo signed into law an amendment to the 2007 Rhode Island Cesspool Act that requires new owners of real estate to disconnect and replace cesspools within 12 months of acquiring the property. This measure goes into effect on January 1, 2016.

### **Sewer System**

The remaining homes and businesses are connected to a wastewater collection system operated by the town which discharges to the City of Fall River sewage treatment facility.

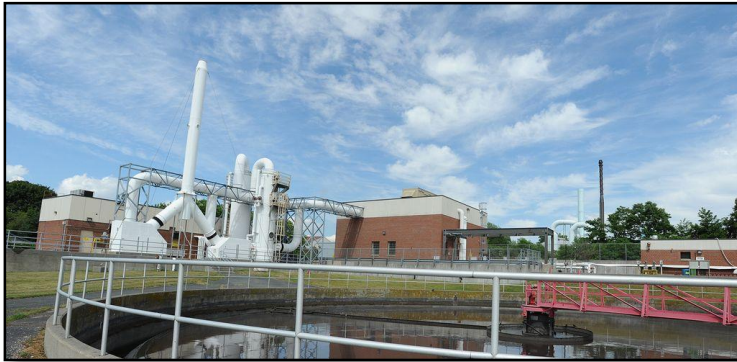
Other privately financed projects have also extended the sewer system within the town. The developer of Countryview Estates, the age-restricted manufactured home community in the northeastern portion of town, installed sewers within that development, including a station to pump the sewage to Fall River's Hancock Street sewer line. Other smaller extensions of the town sewer system include those that tie into the interceptor installed for the Villages on Mount Hope Bay on Main Road, a separate line that services Brookdale Sakonnet Bay Manor assisted living facility on Main Road, and those that tie directly into the Fall River system in the Stafford Road/Hancock Street area as well as the Bourne Mill apartment complex.

In addition, annual funding through the Community Development Block Grant program has provided for limited expansion of the sewers in northern Tiverton in the areas of State Avenue and Shove Street. Such expansion is needed to address the many failed or failing septic systems in that area of town where homes were built on small lots with inadequate leech fields. Installation of

sewers is part of the redevelopment of an area that qualifies for federal funding due to the high concentration of low and moderate income households, although the amount of funding provided on an annual basis (\$110,000) is relatively modest.

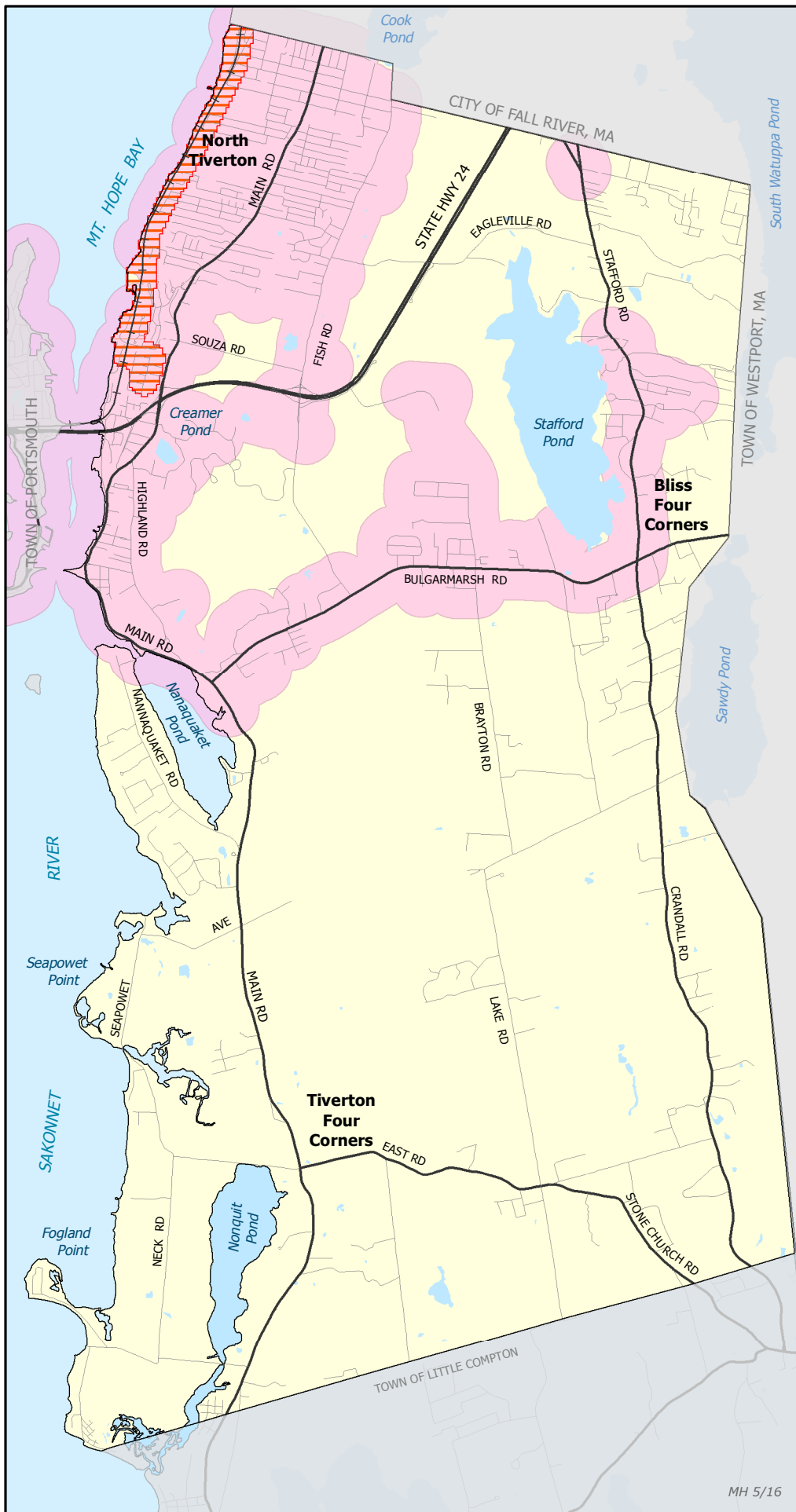
In 2014, a Tiverton Waste Water District (TWWD) was established to implement a major sewer expansion project at Riverside Drive, Bay Street and the Robert Gray neighborhood. This project is partially funded by \$7.1 million in grants and loans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's rural sewer and water program. TWWD is proposing construction of a low pressure sewer system. The system has been deemed the most cost effective and efficient way to provide sewer service to this area.







The project will include both public right of way work for installation of the sewer lines and curb-to-curb repaving as well as the necessary private property work to complete the connection to the building. Homeowners on Riverside Drive and in the Robert Gray neighborhood approved this project in a special referendum in the Spring of 2015. The TWWD employs one full-time general manager. It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2016.



*Fall River Wastewater Treatment Plant*





-  SEWERED AREAS
-  WATER SERVICE AREA
-  PONDS, OPEN WATER
-  MINOR ROAD
-  MAJOR ROAD
-  RAILWAY

Source: Sewered Areas (2012) and Water Service Areas (2005) courtesy of RIDEM and RIGIS.



Disclaimer: This map is not the product of a Professional Land Survey. It was created by Mapping and Planning Services for general reference, informational, planning and guidance use, and is not a legally authoritative source as to the location of natural or manmade features. Proper interpretation of this map may require the assistance of appropriate professional services. The Town of Tiverton or MPS makes no warranty, express or implied, related to the spatial accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currentness of this map.

TIVERTON COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN  
**Figure 7-3**  
**EXISTING PUBLIC WATER & SEWER AREAS**



MH 5/16

## 7.9 Stormwater Management

The Town's requirements for stormwater management within new subdivisions and land development projects are detailed in the Land Development & Subdivision Regulations. Drainage plans are reviewed by the Department of Public Works (DPW) director and the Planning Board's peer review engineer. Best management practices and low impact development techniques are encouraged for stormwater control. Additional requirements such as prohibiting on draining to public roadways and on connecting sump pumps to storm sewer are covered in the Code of Ordinance. All projects area required to submit a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control plan (SESC). Strict compliance with the plan will be monitored for the duration of the development by the Town's DPW, Building Official or appointed personal.

North Tiverton's older developments have minimal drainage systems, many of which have been installed in a piecemeal manner. Most of the older systems discharge directly into receiving waters. Correcting or minimizing problems of basement flooding, septic system failure and the flooding and freezing of run-off onto town streets begins with an engineering analysis of existing conditions and potential area build-out. Based on this analysis, and availability of town funding, the selection of areas for corrective action can be done.

A 'Phase 2 Stormwater Management Plan', mandated by the Federal Clean Water Act, has been implemented and a RIPDES (Rhode Island Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permit has been issued, enabling the town to drain permitted stormwater into Narragansett Bay. The Town maintains drainage systems within the public right-of-way, including the use of a street sweeper to keep catch basin clean of debris. There are a few stormwater detention basins that, in general, are maintained by homeowner associations, required through the subdivision approval process. The Town has easement rights to access stormwater facilities on private land to complete maintenance as necessary. Funding for personnel and equipment comes from property taxes; there is no stormwater utility accessed in the Town.



*Bio-retention drainage system installation*



### **7.10 Public Works and Solid Waste Management**

The Public Works Department has a staff of 11. It is charged with maintaining the town owned roads including snow removal, street sweeping, roadside mowing, catch basin cleaning and sign maintenance, as well as the Town landfill operation, maintenance of the Town's two public beaches and the repair and maintenance of town buildings other than those used by the School Department. Municipal solid waste collection is contracted out.

Solid waste generated by the Town is disposed at the town sanitary landfill in south Tiverton, the only municipal landfill still operating in the state. It is located on 33 acres of a 125-acre parcel owned by the Town. The remainder of the parcel serves as a wooded buffer area adjacent to the Town Farm Recreation Area and Weetamoo Woods. A mandatory recycling 'No Bin, No Barrel' and a town trash bag purchase 'Pay As You Throw' program (generating approximately \$400,000 per year) has been implemented to extend the life of the landfill and help pay for closure. It is expected that the landfill will reach capacity in 2017-18.

Operation of the landfill is governed by state regulations concerning fill methods, permitted types of refuse, impact controls (including leachate control) and projected life span. As required by the State, the Town has retained an engineering consultant to update its landfill management plan, and to provide quarterly monitoring of test wells surrounding the landfill.

The cost to close the landfill is estimated at \$8 million. The Town maintains a restricted landfill closure account that was approximately \$5.6 million in 2015.

### **7.11 Town Administration**

Tiverton has a council/administrator form of government consisting of seven council members and the Town Administrator. The Town Council President is the chief executive, while the Town Administrator manages the day-to-day affairs of the Town. The budget is developed by the Town Administrator, Town Council, and the School Superintendent and School Committee, and reviewed by an elected Budget Committee who makes recommendations before it is voted by the electors at the Financial Town Referendum in May each year. An elected Town Treasurer oversees the fiscal concerns of the town together with an appointed (part-time) Tax Collector. There are two part-time judges who preside over the Municipal and Probate Courts. The Municipal Court justice is appointed by the Town Council and the Probate Court justice is elected.

Many town functions or community areas of interest, including planning, zoning, conservation, historical preservation, open space and trees, recreation, sewage disposal, harbor and coastal waters, cemeteries, the arts, and economic development, are managed by volunteer committees.

The Tiverton Town Charter was first written in 1994 and revised in 1999 and 2004. Charter review by an elected Charter Review Commission is overdue. Any amendments proposed by the commission must be approved by the voters. The Town Council also has the authority to recommend revisions at any time with changes approved by the voters at a special election.

## 7.12 Public Information

Tiverton residents experience multiple sources of information. The town is “covered” by four newspapers, the Sakonnet Times (weekly), the Newport Daily News, the Providence Journal and the Fall River Herald News. Legal and public information notices are typically published in one or most of these papers. Videotapes of Town Council and other meetings of wide spread public interest are broadcast on a local cable network at regular intervals each week, although some sparsely populated areas of town are not covered by this local cable programming.

Tiverton has a website, which in 2005 developed into a comprehensive official website supported with town funding. Unlike the neighboring Towns of Westport and Little Compton, however, Tiverton does not publish an annual report, a listing of tax levies, nor a citizen’s guide to town services.

Tiverton now has a computerized Global Information System (GIS) which provides essential information about the exact location of natural and built features and real estate boundaries.

## 7.13 Services and Facilities Goals and Objectives

### Goal

**To provide community services and facilities which respond to the public safety, educational, governmental, infrastructure and informational needs of Tiverton’s residents in a timely, efficient and cost effective manner.**

### Objectives:

- Define specific community facility and infrastructure needs attainable within the constraints of available resources, and assure adequate capital planning congruent with meeting these needs.
- Evaluate and improve mechanisms for efficient delivery of public safety services, including police, fire, ambulance and emergency management.
- Maintain and improve an effective educational system and library service.
- Evaluate ways to provide quality services to Tiverton’s growing population of senior citizens.
- Maintain and develop public burial lands for the use of Tiverton residents.
- Preserve, maintain and improve reliable sources of high quality, affordable drinking water.
- Plan for a comprehensive wastewater management strategy that encompasses limited sewer expansions where needed, along with the establishment of wastewater management districts to regulate on-site sewage disposal systems.
- Improve the management, operation and administration of town services and facilities, including town offices, equipment and town-owned property.

- Provide more effective mechanisms of communication between citizens and town government.

## 7.14 Actions

**Action 1: Develop and annually update a five year facilities and capital equipment budget for the various town departments and ancillary services, including public safety, schools, library, water, public sewage and landfill management, which might be realized through taxes, fees, bond issuance and state and federal funding, within the Town’s financial capabilities. The plan should also consider adjustments to the existing Development Impact Fee.**

Perhaps at no time in its history has the Town of Tiverton faced such difficult choices in terms of the need to plan for and finance the upgrading of its aging community facilities. For example, the need for an integrated public safety complex has been widely expressed. Consideration should be given to an increase in the Development Impact Fee, adopted in 2007, to cover not just school needs but also fire, police and public works. A frequently updated and publically accessible capital expenditure budget, based on priority needs, will provide a road map for future capital spending.

**Action 2: Consider the consolidation of fire and police facilities into a central public safety complex.**

The proposal for the development of a municipal campus that would include facilities for both police and fire is prompted by the inadequacies and long-term maintenance needs of the existing public safety buildings, as well as by the efficiency that such new facilities would have in meeting the future needs of a growing population. Tiverton should address this issue by preparing a study that evaluates building space and equipment needs, suitable locations and estimated costs to design and construct a public safety complex.

**Action 3: Analyze the risk posed by Tiverton’s inaccessible forest areas, in coordination with the RIDEM Division of Forestry, the Tiverton Open Space Commission, and the Tiverton Land Trust and develop an appropriate fire control plan.**

There are more than 2,500 acres of undeveloped forested land in Tiverton, large portions of which have limited vehicle access and no service from fire hydrants. In periods of severe drought these areas could pose a risk of wildfire that would be difficult to control.

**Action 4: Provide a broad range of library services for all age groups and cultural-ethnic backgrounds that maximizes the potential of the new Tiverton Public Library, while retaining Union Library as an important program facility and a vital component in the architectural setting of Historic Tiverton Four Corners. Develop a plan for the long-term maintenance of the new Tiverton Public Library building and surrounding grounds.**

The Board of Trustees, working with the Tiverton Library Foundation and the Town Council, should begin immediately to develop a plan for acquiring financial resources to provide adequate

long-term care of the town's newest capital asset. Taking action now, before major facilities repair is needed, will go a long way toward ensuring that funding will be available when those repairs become necessary.

**Action 5: Establish a 'Friends of the Senior Center' group to organize development and construction of a new facility.**

Enlist community support to develop a plan for a new facility to meet the growing needs of an aging population. The existing building does not allow for current programs to grow or the ability to add new programs. It is time to begin to examine strategies for serving the needs of the 'baby boomer' generation as they approach retirement.

**Action 6: The Cemetery Commission should address land availability and financial needs to ensure successful operation of the Pocasset Hill Cemetery and other burial lands for the foreseeable future.**

As space in the Pocasset Hill Cemetery becomes limited, there is need for additional burial land for town residents. The Cemetery Commission is responsible for addressing both long-term space needs and the adequate financing of the operation and maintenance of town cemetery land.

**Action 7: Undertake a comprehensive study of current and future potable water needs in all of Tiverton to determine what constrains exist and how future development and build-out will impact water supplies.**

Water management plans for the two water supply districts, Stone Bridge and North Tiverton, are required by the state, and each has prepared a plan. However, a plan addressing water supply for the entire town has yet to be developed. Moreover, the water districts advise the Planning Board on water supply availability for new subdivisions and major developments, but this is done project by project on a piecemeal basis. It is essential for good development planning to understand future water availability and constraints.

**Action 8: Consider merging the North Tiverton Fire District and the Stone Bridge Fire District into a single entity.**

A merger of the two water districts could result in lower costs to consumers by achieving economies of scale. A single water district might have the resources to implement delivery system upgrades in a more timely and cost efficient manner than at present. Since both districts are chartered by the state, a merger would require state legislative approval following a vote by ratepayers at the districts' annual meetings.

**Action 9: Develop a town-wide Drought Management Strategy outlining a joint effort between the Town of Tiverton and the North Tiverton and Stone Bridge Fire Districts.**

Such a plan should be developed in accordance with the State Guide Plan Element 724: Drought Management Plan and should minimize the effects of drought on public health, safety, economic

activity and environmental resources.

**Action 10: Continue the work of the Tiverton Waste Water District to implement a phased expansion of sewers in the north end of the town, especially the Bay Street area, the Riverside Drive area, the Robert Gray area and the area north of Judson Street, so as to address the environmental challenges resulting from failed cesspools and outdated septic systems.**

This policy is consistent with the Rhode Island Cesspool Act of 2007, as amended, and with policies of the R.I. Department of Environmental Management. Now that the Tiverton Waste Water District is in place and homeowners in the Robert Gray and Riverside Drive neighborhoods have approved sewer expansion in these areas, the process will move forward with grants and loans from the USDA Sewer and Water Program.

**Action 11: New roadways or existing roadways which are to be completely reconstructed should provide for the safety of all users of all ages and abilities including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists. Sidewalks are strongly encouraged along roadways where pedestrian use is sufficient. Bicycle lanes and crosswalks are also encouraged where use patterns establish a clear need.**

Tiverton's roadways are increasingly used by pedestrians and bicyclists, but many Town roadways lack sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes. Such amenities can be established for new roads or reconstructed roads without diminishing a high level of service for motorists or involving large expenditures. Tiverton recognizes the many health benefits of walking and biking and further supports greater public transportation opportunities which will create a need for safe and convenient van and bus stops. Roadways should also consider the mobility needs of children, the elderly and people with physical disabilities. The state has adopted a complete streets policy and Tiverton embraces this policy.

**Action 12: Prepare for the closing, capping and monitoring of the municipal solid waste landfill by seeking additional funding sources to cover the cost of closure. Study alternative methods of solid waste disposal.**

As noted, the 'Pay As You Throw' and 'No Bins, No Barrels' policies have raised additional funds to augment the landfill closure account. But additional funds may be needed to fill any projected gap. Following closure, the town must identify and adopt the most convenient and cost-effective method of solid waste management and disposal.

**Action 13: Insure that Tiverton's GIS mapping system is maintained and upgraded so that it accurately reflects existing data and employs the most current software available.**

Adoption of an updated Geographic Information System (GIS) computerized system provides a valuable planning tool and enables the town to manage and present data on the town's physical characteristics and infrastructure.