

Plan for Tomorrow Update - Community Facilities, June 2024 Draft

1 CHAPTER VISION

2 The purpose of this Chapter is to evaluate Canterbury's
3 community facilities, recreational facilities, and utilities.
4 Providing and maintaining the essential services of
5 community and recreational facilities are jointly one of the
6 primary functions of government. As the population and
7 the demographics of the community grow and change over
8 time, it is important for the community to adjust its delivery
9 of services to meet the needs of the changing population.

10
11 The Community Facilities Chapter is organized into
12 evaluations of Canterbury's Departments and Town
13 services, with special discussions included of the School
14 District, public utilities and the recreational opportunities
15 and conservation lands. The strength and efficiency of each
16 service is paramount to the community's well-being. The
17 2020 Community Survey and 2022 Visioning Session results
18 help obtain residents' perspectives into these critical
19 components of the Town's infrastructure and programs.
20 Some of the survey results included short term and long-
21 term needs and goals. Suggestions for future improvements
22 in the Town's community facilities can also be found in
23 Canterbury's 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and
24 through analysis of the Departments' future capacities.

25
26 One tool the Town can use to help manage its community
27 facilities is the preparation and update of an annual Capital
28 Improvements Program (CIP), as part of the municipality's

29 financial planning and budgeting process. This CIP is central
30 to the chapter's Overall Key Findings which presents a list of
31 recommended long-term actions relative to community
32 facilities, recreational facilities, and utilities. The location of
33 the Town's community and recreational facilities are
34 provided on maps to accompany this chapter.

35 36 TOWN CHARACTER

37 The Town of Canterbury is a mix of natural and agricultural
38 landscapes co-existing with the villages and residences
39 throughout Town. The Town has a strong sense of
40 community described as the sense of "knowing" people,
41 hosting community events, school sports, and supporting
42 the arts. Shaker Village, the Elkins Public Library, the Town
43 store, the farmers market and the Canterbury Fair play roles
44 in defining the community's character. Canterbury loves its
45 rural and historic character, its sense of community, and it is
46 known as a great place to raise children. There is a vibrant
47 sense of "village" in the Town center, and having a village
48 helps people of all ages get to know one another. A
49 demonstration of shared community spirit is the Canterbury
50 Community Newsletter, published monthly for the
51 community by the Canterbury United Community Church to
52 inform Townspeople about local happenings with
53 downloadable back issues available on the Town's website.

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54

55 THE TOWN'S THOUGHTS

56 Those responding to the Community Survey were given the
57 opportunity to provide their priorities regarding
58 investments in community services. Road maintenance was
59 the highest priority, followed by fire protection and
60 recycling. Of least concern was expanding the Town office
61 and library hours. Overall, concerns related to the tax rate
62 was also expressed throughout the Survey.

63

64 A common theme throughout the 2020 Community Survey
65 was the strong appreciation for the array of natural
66 recreation opportunities in Canterbury and how they are
67 directly connected to respondents' high quality of life in
68 Town. When asked about their favorite natural area,
69 respondents most commonly cited Shaker Village and its
70 trails, Morrill Pond, and the Merrimack River. Following the
71 trend of respondents' favorite locations, hiking trails and
72 waterfront leisure were found to be the most desirable
73 forms of outdoor recreation. This was further indicated
74 through rankings of facilities which the Town should
75 provide in the future. Results favored additional signed and
76 maintained trails followed by waterfront recreation such as
77 an enhanced Town beach and a Merrimack River boat
78 launch. There was an overwhelming desire for connection
79 to a rail trail or multi-use trails network, with supported
80 trail activities for hiking, cross country skiing/snowshoeing,
81 and mountain biking.

82

83 The 2020 Community Survey also indicated about 76% of
84 respondents currently have adequate broadband internet
85 service for their needs and about 56% of respondents had
86 adequate cell phone coverage. While preserving
87 Canterbury's rural landscape remains the Town's highest
88 priority, it is also understood that full broadband internet
89 and cell coverage are critical for Town services to operate
90 effectively, and also need to serve home-based businesses
91 or new businesses looking to relocate to Canterbury. The
92 current level of cellular and broadband service does not fit
93 the existing residential needs and inadequate coverage
94 would discourage new residents from moving to
95 Canterbury.

96

97 A June 2022 Visioning Session addressed community
98 facilities, broadband internet, energy and recreational
99 opportunities. Overall, most residents appeared mostly
100 satisfied with the Town's services and infrastructure
101 regarding community facilities and utilities with the need
102 for improvement focused on better access to broadband
103 and cellular connectivity. Solar panel energy on community
104 buildings is generally supported as well as the small-scale
105 solar installations at residences and businesses. Canterbury
106 would like to consider community power as an option and
107 have residents and businesses make their own vendor
108 decisions. The desirability of trails for both recreation and
109 getting around the village were discussed, as was the
110 benefits a trails Committee or trail related groups can bring.

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111 MUNICIPAL BUILDING

112 The Municipal Safety Complex building at 26 Baptist Road is
113 the Town's command center in time of area emergencies
114 and provides for inside storage of all Town equipment and
115 vehicles. It is also the facility where various Department
116 trainings are held. The Municipal Building houses the Fire
117 and Rescue Department, Police Department, Emergency
118 Management services, and the Highway Department.

119

120 SHORT TERM NEEDS FOR THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

121 The Town anticipates a need for better audio-visual
122 equipment, communications, technology, computer,
123 software, telephone lines, new internet, and furniture for
124 future Emergency Operation Commands that are held in the
125 Safety Complex Building. Security cameras need to be
126 added in the safety Municipal Building for both employee
127 and visitor safety.

128

129 HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT STAFFING AND 130 EQUIPMENT

131 The Canterbury Highway Department operates out of the
132 shared Municipal Safety Complex and has the responsibility
133 for the maintenance and rehabilitation of over 85 miles of
134 Town roads. The Department also conducts storm and tree
135 cleanup, maintain culverts, fixes washouts, conducts snow
136 removal, manages paving projects and conducts gravel road
137 grading. The Highway Department website is
138 <https://www.canterbury-nh.org/highway-Department>.

139

140 Canterbury has one full-time road agent appointed by the
141 selectman, four full-time employees and one part-time
142 employee. One position is also assigned to take care of
143 transfer station duties. Concerns regarding recruitment and
144 retaining Highway Department staff has been ongoing.

145

146 The Highway Department has responsibility for 12 vehicles
147 and major equipment items, including two road graders, a
148 multi-purpose dump/snowplow truck, a refuse packer
149 truck, backhoe, a pickup truck with plow, a Farmall Tractor,
150 a utility trailer, a front loader and a green grader.

151

152 Table: Highways & Streets, Street Lighting, Staffing
153 Department Total Budget, 2021-2023 as compared to other
154 communities

Total Highway Budgets	Population 2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 Budget Dollars Per Capita
Boscawen	4,043	\$589,798	\$629,154	\$622,064	\$153.86
Canterbury	2,389	\$762,995	\$825,902	\$863,407	\$361.41
Gilmanton	3,760	\$934,88	\$932,3	\$1,059,105	\$281.67
Loudon	5,591	\$875,705	\$855,064	\$927,743	\$165.96

155

156 Per capita, Canterbury spends more on Highway
157 Department costs than neighboring communities. This
158 higher cost is due to many factors, including the number of
159 road miles the Town needs to maintain especially during the

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160 stormy winter season, road repairs during the muddy spring
161 season and flooded conditions, culvert upgrades, and the
162 original condition of the roads will influence upgrade cost.
163 Repaving is a high priority for the Highway Department.

164

165 HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT SHORT TERM NEEDS

166 Maintaining a fully staffed Highway Department is a leading
167 short-term need. The Highway Department would like to
168 obtain a GPS unit to find the culvert locations more easily
169 during storms and have radios to enhance communications
170 with other Departments during response operations. This is
171 another challenge of Canterbury not having broadband
172 internet throughout the Town. In anticipation of the next 4
173 years, \$10,000 was deposited in the capital reserves for
174 highway equipment in 2023, specifically, \$30,000 for a
175 highway truck, \$30,000 for a highway grader, and \$12,000
176 for a rescue truck, \$30,000 for a highway loader and
177 \$30,000 for a highway backhoe. These amounts are
178 identical to what the Town deposited in 2022. The Town
179 also anticipates a need for a zero-turn mower.

180

181 HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT LONG TERM NEEDS

182 In addition to planning for capital equipment purchases, as
183 time permits the Highway Department plans to periodically
184 review various policies and procedures such as their snow
185 plowing agreement with Northfield and downed tree and
186 limb reporting to utility companies, and to map the
187 locations of all Town-owned culverts for more efficient
188 cleanout and maintenance.

189

190 VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE STAFFING 191 AND EQUIPMENT

192 The Canterbury Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department
193 headquartered at the Municipal Building consists of 24
194 volunteer members fulfilling various roles. A part-time Fire
195 Chief also serves as the Emergency Management Director,
196 and a full-time Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) are
197 employed by the Town. The volunteer fire fighters and EMTs
198 are provided with financial assistance to maintain their
199 certifications. Canterbury Department is constantly
200 recruiting to attract more volunteers. For equipment, the
201 Department has three (3) pumper/tankers, two forestry
202 vehicles and two rescue vehicles. The Fire and Rescue
203 Department has a Facebook page at
204 <https://www.facebook.com/canterburyfd> to keep residents
205 informed of immediate happenings. The official website is
206 at <https://www.canterbury-nh.org/fire-Department>.

207

208 The Department responds to medical emergencies calls,
209 requiring firefighters to have advance medical training,
210 through a partnership with Penacook Rescue Service. The
211 Town has no ambulance and no direct ambulance service.
212 One quarter of all calls are responses to emergencies on
213 Interstate 93. The Canterbury Fire Department provides
214 outreach and education including fire prevention talks,
215 woodstove inspections, and organizing an annual Fire Safety
216 and Prevention week in October with activities like speaking

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217 to elementary school classes. Through membership with
218 the Capital Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact, the Department
219 receives assistance from neighboring communities in case
220 of a major fire and in turn provides assistance and
221 equipment to other Towns in the area. There are nearly 10
222 dry hydrants and over a dozen fire access water sources in
223 Canterbury. A Town cistern is available on Intervale Road in
224 the northwestern corner of Canterbury. A private pump
225 house and hydrant system was installed at Shaker Village.

226

227 Capital Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact Incidents, 2021- 2022

Town	2022	2023	% Change
Boscawen	272	218	3.9%
Canterbury	301	342	13.6%
Concord	10,644	10,378	-2.5%
Loudon	1,195	923	-22.8%

228

229 Canterbury had a notable increase fire and rescue calls from
230 2022 to 2023. All calls are dispatched through the Capital
231 Area Mutual Aid Fire Compact of which the Canterbury Fire
232 Department is a member. Approximately 25% of
233 Canterbury's calls pertain to incidents on I-93.

234

235 VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE NEEDS SUMMARY

236 Engine 3 was purchased in the early 1990's and has failed
237 the pump test for the past five years. During Town Meeting
238 2023, \$850,000 was authorized for the purchase of a new
239 fire truck. Of the \$850,000, \$360,000 would come from the
240 Fire Truck Capital Reserves, and the remaining \$490,000

241 paid for using bonds or a grant. Other needs include routine
242 emergency medical services and fire training on a regular
243 basis for volunteers, additional collaboration for search and
244 rescue training with Fish and Game, and training at least
245 half of all Department members in hazardous materials
246 safety and handling. The Department continues to
247 encourage EMTs and paramedics to train and maintain
248 certifications through partial reimbursement.

249

250 During the 2022 visioning session, it was noted the section
251 of Interstate 93 which includes Canterbury (Exits 17, 18, 19)
252 is among the most unsafe stretches of interstate in the
253 State and resources required to respond to serious crashes
254 can be a concern. The Town relies on the Mutual Aid
255 Compact and the NH State Police. Recommendations
256 include move to two-person full-time staffing for better call
257 response coverage within the next five years, recruit more
258 volunteers, and increase the Department's training budget
259 Department.

260

261 POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING AND 262 EQUIPMENT

263 The Canterbury Police Department is staffed by a Chief, a
264 lieutenant, and three Officers. There is currently a vacancy
265 for a civilian Administrative Assistant. The Police utilizes
266 2021 hybrid cruisers The official Department website is
267 <https://www.canterbury-nh.org/police-Department> while
268 its Facebook page permits regular outreach at

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269 <https://www.facebook.com/canterburypoliceDepartment>.

270 The Department operates out of the Municipal Safety
 271 Complex building. Since 2020, the number of calls for
 272 services has been steady with a decline in 2021 due to the
 273 pandemic. As population and the economy grows in
 274 Canterbury, more police services will likely be necessary.

275

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Calls for Service	2,428	1,826	2,360	2,229

276

277 The Police Department has individual mutual aid
 278 agreements with surrounding Towns, Merrimack County
 279 Sheriff’s Department, and the NH State Police. Police calls
 280 for service are dispatched through the Merrimack County
 281 Sheriff Dispatch. They enforce state and local laws to ensure
 282 resident safety.

283 POLICE DEPARTMENT NEEDS SUMMARY

284 The Police Department plans to review their various
 285 standard operating procedures and policies annually for
 286 revision as situations arise and to be consistent with
 287 national standards. Emergency multi-agency drills with the
 288 Shaker Regional School District and the Canterbury
 289 Elementary School are a high priority. Essential equipment
 290 upgrades like purchasing Automated External Defibrillators
 291 and radios for interoperability and maintaining certifications
 292 need to occur.

293

294 TOWN CENTER

295 Canterbury has a beautiful, welcoming Town Center on
 296 Hackleboro Road. The Town has invested in their Town
 297 buildings with recent improvements the Sam Lake House
 298 and associated bonds and loans to be paid off by 2023. The
 299 schedule of Town property includes over 17 acres of land
 300 and buildings.

301



302

303

304 Within the Town Center itself between Center Road and
 305 Hackleboro Road are a covered gazebo on the Town green,
 306 the Town Offices at the Sam Lake House (10 Hackleboro
 307 Road), Elkins Public Library (9 Center Road), Meeting House
 308 (7 Center Road), and Town Hall (3 Center Road) with five
 309 acres and a small, shared parking area. Other buildings and
 310 land include the Historical Society Schoolhouse, Municipal
 311 Building (utilized by the Highway, volunteer Fire/Rescue and
 312 Police Departments with 5 acres of land), Transfer Station
 313 building with over 6 acres of land, the Gazebo and the
 314 Elkins Historical Building (former Library at 3 Baptist Road),

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315 and the Elizabeth F. Houser Museum (11 Old Tilton Road). A
316 small municipal water supply system supplies the Town
317 Center buildings as drawn from a well on the Town Hall
318 land.

319
320 The Town website <https://www.canterbury-nh.org> is
321 maintained by the Town administration. Town Department
322 and board meetings are posted on the Town calendar,
323 agendas and minutes are posted, Town documents,
324 regulations, and ordinances are available online. The Town
325 Facebook page keeps people apprised of the latest
326 community news at
327 <https://www.facebook.com/Townofcanterburynh>.

328 329 TOWN ANNUAL EXPENDITURES AND CAPITAL 330 IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

331 The Town approves their annual budget and expenditures
332 at Town Meeting which is stated in their Annual Report
333 along with all Department, Board and Committee activities
334 every calendar year. At the 1996 Town Meeting, the voters
335 authorized the Planning Board to prepare and amend a
336 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) pursuant to New
337 Hampshire RSA 674:5-8. A CIP is a schedule that projects
338 future municipal expenditures for necessary capital
339 improvements over a typically six-year period to
340 accommodate changing needs of the community. The six (6)
341 year CIP is intended to be amended annually. The purpose
342 of the CIP is to recognize and resolve deficiencies in existing
343 community and recreational facilities on an annual basis

344 and to anticipate and meet the future demand for capital
345 expenditures, including Town the replacement of vehicles
346 and equipment, renovating Town buildings, producing
347 engineering studies, purchasing land for expansion or
348 conservation, and more.

349
350 Every community needs a Capital Improvements Program to
351 help with the long-term planning of budgets and facilities.
352 The last CIP was produced in 2012, although in 2019 Town
353 administration worked with Department heads for project
354 updates for presentation to the Budget Committee. The CIP
355 update is scheduled to be completed in early 2025.

356 357 **Meeting House**

358 The historic Meeting House at 7 Center Road serves as the
359 location where most Boards and Committees meet regularly
360 within the Town Center. One upcoming project is to install a
361 ductless AC and Heating Unit at the building for comfort
362 during meetings.

363

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364 **Town Hall**

365 The Town Hall is at 3 Center Road is a historic structure
366 dating back to 1754. The Town Hall is accessible to people
367 with disabilities with improvements completed in 2005
368 resulting in vastly improved facilities for the meeting and
369 assembly of Town Committees and organizations.

370

371 **Town Offices (Sam Lake House)**

372 The renovated Town Offices (Sam Lake House) are located
373 at 10 Hackleboro Road. Town administrative functions such
374 as Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Town Administration,
375 Assessing, Code Enforcement, and more occurs at the Town
376 Office on 10 Hackleboro Road. The historic Sam Lake house
377 is adjacent to a fire pond and the property includes a field
378 of solar panels.

379

380 **Elkins Public Library**

381 The new library at 9 Center Road provides materials and
382 informational services to all community residents to fulfill
383 their educational and recreational needs. Special emphasis
384 has been placed on being an educational support center
385 and in stimulating young children's interest in reading and
386 learning. Elkins Library serves as a center for the intellectual
387 growth of the community. The Elkins Library has a small
388 meeting room available to Town groups on an "as available"
389 basis. The library is governed by a Board of Trustees. Its
390 official website is <https://elkinspubliclibrary.org> and it
391 maintains and active Facebook page at
392 <https://www.facebook.com/ElkinsPublicLibraryNH>.

393

394 The Library Director
395 maintains and publishes
396 weekly notices by email
397 to those who sign up,
398 with the list at nearly
399 1,500 recipients to date.

400 In addition to the

401 Director, the library has
402 four other employees a
403 circulation manager, a
404 youth services librarian,

405 and two circulation librarians. The Elkins Public Library has a
406 capacity of about 130 people and has been unofficially
407 designated a "cooling shelter" due to the air conditioning
408 that can encourage people to drop in and get out of
409 extreme heat weather. The library's collection is at 18,942
410 materials as listed in the 2023 Library Director's Report.
411 Patron visits reached 14,130 participants in 2023, up 35%
412 from 2022. With the placement of the new Elkins Public
413 Library in the Town Center, it is an attraction for all ages
414 open five days per week, Mondays and Tuesdays 9-5,
415 Wednesdays and Thursdays 9-7, and Saturdays 9-12. Free
416 Wi-Fi is available 24/7 outside the Library and Chromebooks
417 are available for use indoors. The Friends of Elkins Public
418 Library (FOEPL) are volunteers who serve as a connecting
419 link between the library and community and always
420 welcome new members and ideas for the upcoming year.
421 One recent accomplishment is the placement of a Discover



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422 Book bin outside the library to recycle used and worn
423 books.

424

425 Library Budget, 2018-2023

426

Year	Budget	Percent Change
2020	\$221,075.00	-
2021	\$198,005.00	-10.4%
2022	\$236,996.00	19.7%
2023	\$259,258.00	9.4%

427

428 LIBRARY NEEDS SUMMARY

429 Competitive wages to retain staff is a priority for patrons.
430 The Town library employees are seeking support to conduct
431 outreach work with Granite State Visiting Nurses
432 Association to provide wellness programs and education
433 year-round. Blood drives are to be held at the library. Town
434 communications are an important Library goal which would
435 enable creating a part-time paid communications staff
436 position to maintain email list, create weekly news postings,
437 and conduct emergency announcements.

438 TRANSFER STATION, RECYCLING PROGRAM 439 AND LANDFILL

440 Solid waste is of tremendous concern in Canterbury. The
441 Transfer Station at 83 Baptist Road is situated on above 6
442 acres of land and accepts a wide range of recyclables. The

443 transfer station is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from
444 4:00 to 6:45 PM and on Saturdays 8:00 AM to 5:45 PM.
445 Recycling is mandatory in Canterbury and residents use a
446 pay-as-you-throw program, with the purchase of bags
447 available at Town Office, Transfer Station and Shaw's in
448 Concord. Upgraded equipment like a new baler is
449 sometimes necessary to maintain operations with the influx
450 of recyclables. Tipping fees increased from \$74.70 to \$85.00
451 per ton and new state mandated groundwater testing for
452 PFAS has increased in cost. Staff includes a part-time
453 Transfer Station Manager who usually works with the
454 Highway Department part-time, and two transfer station
455 employees, with assistance from the Highway Department
456 staff to fill in as needed. The official website is at
457 <https://www.canterbury-nh.org/transfer-station>.

458 To determine the future of solid waste and recycling in
459 Canterbury, the Solid Waste Committee is conducting
460 research to determine options and goals for the Town's
461 Transfer Station, recycling program and trash pickup
462 program. Considerations include budgeting, building
463 expansion, compactor issues, composting and recycling
464 advocacy, office building, green bag issues, and staffing. The
465 Transfer Station is sited partially atop of the Town's old
466 landfill, and landfill closure will occur in the future. A
467 Transfer Station Upgrade Capital Reserve Fund is in place to
468 save for various aspects of the transfer station.

469 TRANSFER STATION, RECYCLING PROGRAM AND LANDFILL 470 NEEDS SUMMARY

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471 The Town recently invested in upgraded recycling, with the
 472 new baler running by fall 2023. Transfer station staff and
 473 highway employees are trained on the operations of the
 474 baler and only baled cardboard is accepted by the vendor.
 475 In the future plastic and mixed paper will also be baled. The
 476 financial aspects of recycling are a key issue. A long-term
 477 goal is to host a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day
 478 every two years with grant funding. In 2022, \$1,000 was set
 479 aside in the Capital Reserve Fund for landfill closure
 480 although more should be set aside annually.

481 TOWN CEMETERIES

482 Canterbury has 33 documented historic family and
 483 community cemeteries, of which the Town maintains 27.
 484 Only one of these cemeteries, Maple Grove Cemetery, has
 485 ample available space for future interments. In 2010, it was
 486 written that Canterbury’s burial rate remained consistent at
 487 six to eight interments a year, and it was expected that
 488 there would be enough burial space for many years into the
 489 future. In 2023, there were 16 deaths registered in the
 490 Town of Canterbury for the year ending December 2023.
 491 Cemeteries are overseen by the three Cemetery Trustees
 492 and a cemetery historian and a cemetery sexton in
 493 Canterbury record burials and manage daily operations. The
 494 list of Town-owned cemeteries referenced in the 2023
 495 Annual Report are tabulated below, but the location of all
 496 33 cemeteries in Town are displayed on the Community
 497 Facilities Map.

Cemetery	Size (acres)	Location	Map Lot #	New Interment Capacity
Lyford Cemetery	0.08	Shaker Road	101 073 0	0
Center Cemetery	2.4	Center Road	107 029 0	0
Matthews Cemetery	0.04	Baptist Hill Road	208 018 0	0
Smith Morrill Cemetery	0.05	Borough Road	221 014 0	0
Brown Cemetery	0.04	Asby Road	227 006 0	0
Shell Meetinghouse Cemetery	0.52	Baptist Hill Road	229 004 0	0
Osgoodite Family Cemetery	0.11	Borough Road	232 008 0	0
Maple Grove Cemetery	6.20	Baptist Hill Road	241 023 0	Yes - TBD
Kimball II West Cemetery	0.08	Pickard Road	253 039	0

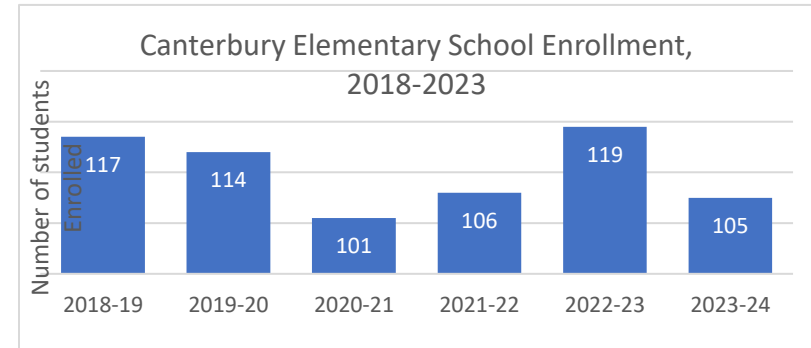
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499 CEMETERIES NEEDS SUMMARY

500 The Town wants to develop engineering, surveying,
501 wetlands mapping, permitting and conceptual design of a
502 second entrance to Maple Grove Cemetery to create access
503 off Baptist Hill Road. A new entrance was created at the
504 Shell Meetinghouse Cemetery to provide access to lower
505 topography, creating an opportunity to inter cremains in a
506 previously inaccessible area.

507 CANTERBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

508 Canterbury has been part of the Shaker Regional School
509 District, School Administrative Unit 80 (SAU 80) with the
510 Town of Belmont since 1971. The K-5 Canterbury
511 Elementary School at 15 Baptist Road, originally
512 constructed in the 1950s was enlarged with an addition in
513 1991. Middle and high school students attend classes in
514 Belmont. The Elementary School's website is at
515 <https://ces.sau80.org> while Shaker Regional School
516 District's website is <https://www.sau80.org>.
517
518 In the mid-late 2000s, enrollment was at an all-time high at
519 nearly 140 students, but in recent years enrollment has
520 declined. According to NH Department of Education
521 enrollment and SAU 80 monthly reports, over the past six
522 years, enrollment in Canterbury Elementary School has
523 decreased by almost 11% as shown by the figure below,
524 although it appears to be stabilizing at around 112-118
525 enrollees by 2024.



526

527 SCHOOL NEEDS SUMMARY

528 Although overall numbers are declining, the SAU 80 reports
529 that there is an increased number of younger students in
530 preschool through first grade needing special education
531 paraprofessional support in addition to behavioral
532 management support. The Canterbury Elementary School
533 has limited space for small group work and there is an
534 overlap between art and music due to shared space with
535 multiple grade levels with inadequate accessibility to
536 children with disabilities, limited conference and office
537 space, and no staff room. There is also a lack of storage,
538 particularly heating space for instructional materials, and
539 there is no outside hallway space for student clothing,
540 backpacks, lunchboxes, extra footwear, etc. as they are all
541 stored in the classroom. However, the Canterbury
542 Elementary School's functional capacity is sufficient, with a
543 projected functional capacity for 147 students per a SAU 80
544 contractor study.

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545 UTILITIES

546 Available utilities in Canterbury are comprised of electric,
547 natural gas, telephone, internet and a small municipal
548 water system in the Town Center that serves only those
549 Town-owned buildings.

550 ELECTRICAL & NATURAL GAS SERVICE

551 The electrical suppliers in Canterbury are Eversource
552 Electric, NH Electric Co-operative, and Unitil. Natural gas is
553 supplied by Liberty Utilities. Eversource serves 554
554 customers within the geographic easterly section of Town,
555 from its southeastern border with Loudon to its northern
556 border with Northfield. Unitil serves 648 customers in the
557 western section of Town from Exit 17 east to New Road,
558 Morrill Road, north to Borough Road and west to the
559 Canterbury rest area on I-93 and crossing to the Merrimack
560 River just across from the Merrimack County Nursing Home
561 in Boscawen, then south along the Merrimack River back to
562 Exit 17. NH Electric Cooperative serves only 76 customers in
563 Canterbury located in the northeastern corner of the Town.

564 Liberty Utilities natural gas service is supplied to Concord,
565 Boscawen, Bow, Canterbury, Loudon and Northfield but
566 neither the number of customers nor the area served is
567 obtainable for communities. Natural gas is typically used to
568 heat homes and hot water, which can also be accomplished
569 by deliveries of heating oil and propane from area
570 companies. Woodstove heating is often used as a backup
571 source during power outages.

572 Solar energy is popular in Canterbury, used by the Town and
573 by residents. Residents can install small solar arrays on their
574 roofs or ground mounted to power homes and feed
575 electricity back to the grid under net metering. One of the
576 earliest adopters of solar energy, in 2010 the Town began its
577 set up of a field of solar panels at the Municipal Building (26
578 Baptist Road) property to partly power the Municipal
579 Building, Town Office and Elkins Library.

580 ENERGY

581 Canterbury has a new Energy Committee that meets
582 monthly to focus on large scale projects that would save
583 money and move Canterbury into a more renewable and
584 energy efficient position. One option the Energy Committee
585 examined is a plan to install solar arrays to cover all needs
586 in the Town-owned buildings. Under NH RSA 53-E, towns
587 can purchase wholesale power for their electric customers
588 (community power) to stabilize energy costs for Town
589 residents. In August 2023, the Energy Committee invited
590 the Community Power Coalition of NH to present on its role
591 as a nonprofit formed by Towns to serve Towns interested
592 in Community Power. At the Committee's
593 recommendation, the select board voted to join the
594 Coalition and appointed members to the new Canterbury
595 Community Power Committee to explore the option of
596 lower-cost electrical community power. This would include
597 continuing to receive electrical services from Eversource,
598 Unitil or NH Electric Co-op but to "opt in" to a lower group
599 cost.

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601 ELECTRICAL, NATURAL GAS, AND ENERGY FUTURE NEEDS 602 SUMMARY

603 Large-scale solar arrays for the Town buildings and a
604 Community Power group electric service for residents and
605 businesses may be solid options for the future of renewable
606 energy and the ability to obtain electricity at a reasonable,
607 lower cost. Economic development will only be possible
608 with appropriate electrical services.

609 WATER AND SEWER

610 There is one small municipal water system in the Town
611 Center that serves only those Town-owned buildings. Two
612 municipal wells, one serving the Municipal Building at 26
613 Baptist Road and one serving the Sam Lake House water
614 system are present in Town. All public buildings that serve
615 25 or more people will have a community water system as
616 registered by NHDES, like the Canterbury Elementary
617 School. The new Exit 17 development will have a registered
618 water system and its sewer system may tie into Concord's
619 wastewater system. Whether a private or community water
620 system, PFAS and groundwater contaminants can be
621 present.

622 There is no municipal water or wastewater treatment
623 system in Canterbury. There are community septic systems
624 in the Town Center. The rest of Canterbury is served by
625 private drinking water wells and private septic systems.

626 WATER AND SEWER FUTURE NEEDS SUMMARY

627 The recent visioning session indicated that if water and
628 sewer infrastructure were to be expanded, the most likely
629 area would be in the vicinity of Exit 17 through an
630 agreement with the City of Concord to extend services into
631 Canterbury.

632 TELEPHONE SERVICE AND BROADBAND INTERNET

633 The telephone company in Canterbury is Consolidated
634 Communications, a fiber optic provider of landline
635 telephone, television and internet service. The primary
636 cellular access is provided by AT & T Services which owns a
637 telecommunications tower and antenna array on Borough
638 Road. Reportedly, most of Canterbury should receive
639 4G/LTE service, yet discussions with Town Departments,
640 emergency responders, and by resident survey indicate cell
641 coverage is inadequate depending on topography or
642 weather conditions. The SBA telecommunications tower
643 with its three antenna arrays are located at 129 Intervale
644 Road is mainly used for emergency services repeaters.
645 Broadband internet does not currently cover the entire
646 Town and is supplied by Comcast, which may also offer "soft
647 phone" or voice over internet protocol (VOIP) coverage
648 depending on the personal software used. Greater access to
649 high-speed internet and cellular services are a high priority
650 of Canterbury residents and Town Departments. It is
651 understood that Comcast is planning in the next year to
652 extend broadband internet service to areas not yet served.

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653
654 TELEPHONE SERVICE AND BROADBAND INTERNET FUTURE
655 NEEDS SUMMARY

656 Canterbury requires better access to high-speed internet
657 while recognizing additional infrastructure cost may be
658 incurred. Much of the fiber optic cabling is in place, yet its
659 functionality and reliability are noted as inadequate. The
660 need for full cellular coverage across the entire Town has
661 been repeated for over a decade but with little result.
662 Attracting the location of additional telecommunications
663 towers and cellular providers to areas of “dead zones” is
664 necessary for the Town’s residents, emergency services, and
665 businesses. Consideration for maintaining aesthetics and
666 community character will also be required and may be
667 addressed by updating the Zoning Ordinance provisions.

668 RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND STAFFING

669
670 A volunteer Recreation Committee serves Canterbury by
671 organizing activities for younger residents including
672 Halloween Candy Stops, Canterbury Youth Soccer for pre-k
673 through grade 5 children, in 2023 summer Caramba Soccer
674 Camp and for maintenance of the Town Beach at Riverland
675 Conservation Area. A Basketball League and a Ski Program
676 have been implemented in past years. Parks and Recreation
677 operates under a small budget of less than \$4,000 annually.
678

679 With the community’s rural characteristics, there are
680 multiple four-season recreational opportunities in
681 Canterbury. The Merrimack River forms the western border
682 with the Town of Boscawen and provides the official Town
683 access point at the Riverland Conservation Area, mostly for
684 swimming, although carry-in canoes could be launched.
685 With such a long river corridor, additional access points for
686 all types of active water recreation such as a boat launch
687 and fishing could be sought except for the recurring danger
688 of drowning in the Merrimack River’s currents. The Town
689 has posted signage and has an emergency life ring at the
690 Riverland Conservation Area.

691
692 Canterbury’s primary built recreational facilities are the
693 hiking trails on conservation areas maintained by the
694 Conservation Commission and on the snowmobile trails
695 over private land maintained by the NH Sno-Shakers. In the
696 winter months, the snowmobile club operates a clubhouse
697 and a large network of trails for snowmobile enthusiasts
698 and cross-country skiers. The unique 2021 Canterbury Tales
699 and Trails guide available on the Elkins Library website and
700 in print narrates trails-goers around more than 30 trails,
701 many with cultural sites and surprises. The official
702 Committee webpage is available at
703 <https://www.facebook.com/Canterburyrec603> while the
704 Town’s page is at [https://www.canterbury-](https://www.canterbury-nh.org/conservation-commission)
705 [nh.org/conservation-commission](https://www.canterbury-nh.org/conservation-commission).

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709 Canterbury Shaker Village on 288 Shaker Road is a working
710 historic farm with unique activities for families and many
711 trails to walk around historic mill ponds. The site is a
712 popular attraction in the summer months and brings
713 thousands of visitors to Canterbury annually. Guided tours
714 and special events are on a fee ticket basis, but people can
715 walk the trails whenever the facility is open. Their website is
716 <https://www.shakers.org>.

717

718 A map of Recreation Facilities, Conservation Areas and Trails
719 is included with this chapter and more information
720 regarding trails and walkability can be found in the
721 Transportation Chapter.

722

723 RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND STAFFING OVERALL NEEDS 724 SUMMARY

725

726 Public opinion agrees solutions regarding recreational
727 opportunities should be “Canterbury specific.” The
728 Conservation Commission has expressed interest in regional
729 trails connections and utilizing trails to entice economic
730 growth. With local trails management, landowners would
731 have an outlet to address concerns if there were trails-
732 related issues. When there is interest, recreational
733 programs such as the basketball and ski programs could be
734 reestablished.

735 CONSERVATION AREAS

736 The Conservation Commission continues its interest in
737 conserving property with ecological value in perpetuity by
738 deed restriction. The Town owns or has an easement on
739 about 1,100 acres of high-value conservation areas in
740 Canterbury, including the Robert S. Fife Conservation Area
741 (49 acres), Merrimack River Conservation Area (600+
742 acres), Muchyedo Banks Wildlife Management Area (291
743 acres), Spender Meadow (118 acres), and Sloping Acres
744 Farm (37 acres). Many other properties such as Kimball
745 Pond Conservation Area, Canterbury Town Forest, Rocky
746 Pond Forest, Schoodac Conservation Area, Shaker Village
747 and more protect the natural woodland features, wetlands
748 and wildlife habitat of the Town.

749

750 The Land Use Change Tax fund enables savings toward the
751 purchase of conservation property or easements. The
752 balance of the Conservation Commission Fund is
753 \$288,973.31. Many of the conservation areas located in
754 Canterbury are most of them are easements or fee-owned
755 properties held by public land trust holders such as the Five
756 Rivers Trust, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire
757 Forests, The Nature Conservancy, Shaker Village, and
758 others. Those conservation properties under the Town’s
759 ownership or holding must be monitored annually by the
760 Conservation Commission. More information about
761 Canterbury’s conservation areas is found in the Natural
762 Features Chapter of the Master Plan.

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763
764 **CONSERVATION AREAS FUTURE NEEDS SUMMARY**
765 Land conserved in perpetuity cannot be developed, and
766 there remains great interest in identifying and protecting
767 the highest value conservation areas. Conservation
768 priorities desired by the community include preserving
769 agricultural land, retaining large blocks of unfragmented
770 land, preserving wildlife corridors, restricting development
771 in wetlands, and preserving open space.

772

773 **OVERALL KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 774 • Develop the Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
775 with annual updates to transparently engage in
776 long-term planning for community facility and
777 capital needs projects.
- 778 • Continue to evaluate options for obtaining widely
779 available high-speed internet access and cellular
780 phone coverage for the entire Town.
- 781 • Conduct a community survey on solid waste
782 recycling and pickup to determine resident
783 preferences for the future direction of the Transfer
784 Station.
- 785 • Promote regular water quality testing for
786 contaminants and PFAS-type chemicals by residents
787 at their homes and report the results of the Town
788 water systems and Transfer Station monitoring well
789 testing.

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- Explore Community Power options via the newly formed Community Power Committee with the goal of reducing electrical costs for all Canterbury customers.
- Attract telecommunications tower and cellular providers to rural locations in Canterbury to provide complete coverage across the community and update the Zoning Ordinance to ensure easier location and placement towers while blending with rural characteristics.