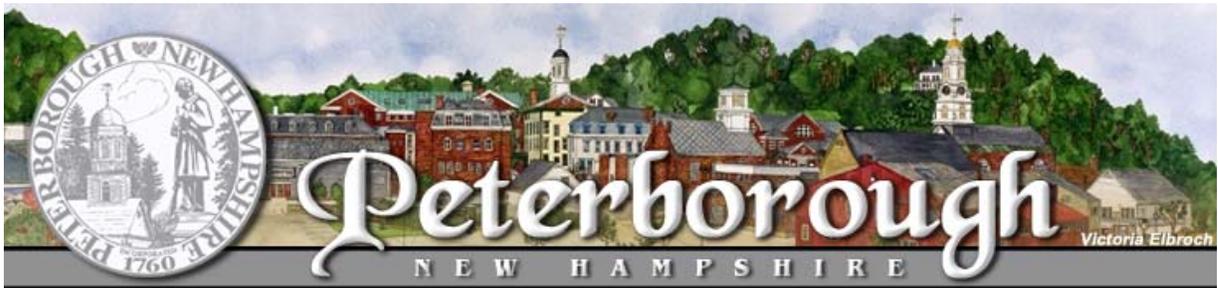


Weller & Michal Architects Inc.



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# Peterborough Municipal Facilities Needs Assessment & Feasibility Study

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Executive  
Summary

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Background

Existing Peterborough Municipal facilities are undersized, overcrowded, and either now or soon will impede the efficient and proper delivery of town services. Five Town Departments are hampered by building or land constraints at their current locations.

Public Works

Water/Wastewater

Fire and Rescue

Police

Recreation

A Municipal Needs Study Committee<sup>1</sup> has been charged by the Select Board with evaluating space needs for all departments, identifying and evaluating facility options and reporting back to the Select Board. The Select Board and the Town Department Heads understand that a 'do-nothing' alternative does not properly and responsibly address the needs of the Peterborough community. The Town needs to anticipate needs ten to twenty-five years from now.

Each Town Department suffers under the burden of space constraints compounded in some circumstances by outdated equipment and building systems. Typically (with the exception of the Police Department), each Department is using facilities that date back over 35 years. Many of the facilities are not up to current demands; consequently many have no possibility of meeting Town needs over the next quarter century.

At the Town Fire Department, undersized sized apparatus bays and overhead doors require the department to special order larger vehicles. The building is not likely to meet current seismic codes, and is not fully sprinklered against fire. There is also no space for a dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Currently, the Fire Chief serves as the Emergency Management Director for the Town of Peterborough. Recent national and local natural disasters underscore the importance of community facilities which can operate in times of distress.

The Police Department garage is in poor condition, and record storage and evidence storage capacity is no longer adequate. It is necessary to separate adult and juvenile holding areas as required by state law.

The Recreation Department is in dire need of better storage (some equipment is stored exposed to the weather and some equipment is actually stored by volunteers in their homes). The Department also is unable to provide recreational services to the community during the winter, as it has no indoor facilities. Much of the foreseen demand for recreational services cannot be met by current facilities.

The Public Works Department is in need of additional garage space to house vehicles, and a central fuel bulk storage facility.

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<sup>1</sup> The Committee is comprised of the Public Works Director, the Town Administrator, and the Office of Community Development Director

## Recommendations

Total current Departmental space is about 33,000 square feet. Departmental needs support a total of 70,000 square feet. New and renovated facilities sized to meet anticipated needs have projected year 2005 costs of \$12 million:

15,900 square foot Fire and Rescue	\$3.9 million
12,000 square foot Police	\$2.7 million
25,000 square foot New Public Works Center	\$3.7 million
10,300 square foot Water/Wastewater (buildings only)	\$2.3 million
6,700 square foot Recreation (buildings only)	\$1.0 million

Such budgets (both space and cost) are consistent with comparable facilities identified in other communities (See Comparable Facilities section starting on page 76). Cost of site acquisition, where required, is NOT included.

The costs noted above are for free-standing, individual projects. Small savings may be achieved by combining new facilities on one site – the “Joint Facility Option”. Savings would stem from some shared facility use, shared land use and therefore a smaller site-size requirement, and possibly a reduction in ‘soft costs’ of implementing one larger project rather than multiple smaller projects.

However, the anticipated savings from a Joint Facility may not outweigh other relevant factors, including relative needs and siting considerations (the Summer Street Fire Department facility is older and less appropriate to current need than the Police Department facility on Grove Street).

The Police Department can remain at the existing Grove Street location. This centrally located, visible site is considered appropriate in terms of the Department’s dispatch requirements, and will permit the needed expansion.

The current Fire Department location is not tenable, and will not support a suitable expansion on the existing site. Consequently, we recommend this Department be relocated into a new facility.

The Recreation Department is best served in the near term by new and expanded athletic fields, and options exist to create these fields both on portions of the Evans Flats site, and at the Town’s sewer lagoons. Recreational use of the Evans Flats site seems consistent with public interest.

The other Department clearly in need of upgraded facilities is the Public Works Department. Their location on Evans Flats prevents the larger site from being easily debated as to the highest and best use of this area (which includes 26.72 acres of town-owned property). Both commercial and conservation interests are thwarted in part by the current siting of this facility.

The 2004 Evans Flats Land Use Analysis of the Peterborough Master Plan Steering Committee identified several options for Evans Flats. That Analysis included several scenarios developed with community input, and observed that a final decision regarding Evans Flats depended in part on the conclusions reached from a municipal needs study. Two of the four scenarios (Concept 2, Concept 4) generated in public sessions identified joint municipal facilities on all or part of the



town land. Opportunity exists to site new facilities for both the Public Works Department and the Fire Department in the general Evans Flats area, but in a manner that maximizes the potential to use the bulk of the undeveloped Evans Flats parcel for other uses, ideally to be determined by an open community planning process.

The Town should seek to acquire both the existing Armory site and the former car dealership on Elm Street. This would allow the most flexible use of the Evans Flats area, without constraining options. Alternatively, consider the frontage along Route 101, as shown in Figure 2 – Municipal Facilities Option 2



Figure 1 - Municipal Facilities Option 1



Figure 2 – Municipal Facilities Option 2