

Chapter 8 Services & Facilities

Section:1 Introduction

This chapter of the Master Plan presents a general description of Hubbardston’s town government, municipal facilities, and services.

As a rural community, Hubbardston does not always have the resources to fund a large range of services and facilities. Because of this, participation in the planning process from all community stakeholders is greatly important. This element of the master plan aims to highlight current conditions and identify immediate needs, inform budgeting, and help plan for a sustainable future.



The data and analysis in this chapter are based on information obtained from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), Town of Hubbardston Records, MA Department of Revenue (DOR) & the U.S. Census Bureau. Methodology for the US Census estimates can be found at: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/methodology.html>

Section 2: Revenue, Resources & Tax Implications

Local Tax Rates

As shown in Table SF-1 below, Hubbardston’s Fiscal Year 20 tax rate (\$14.82) is lower when compared to its neighbors. Over the past ten years, Hubbardston’s tax rate has slowly increased each year from \$10.69 in FY10 to the 2020 rate of \$14.82.

Table SF-1: FY 20 Local Tax Rates

Community	FY2020 Tax Rate
Hubbardston	\$14.82
Barre	\$17.83
Gardner	\$19.74
Phillipston	\$16.94
Princeton	\$15.85
Rutland	\$17.61
Templeton	\$16.83
Westminster	\$17.55

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Tax rate is per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

As depicted in Table SF-2 below, Hubbardston’s 2020 average single-family home tax

bill (\$4,135) appears in the lower range when compared to Princeton (\$6,093), Rutland (\$5,257), and Westminster (\$5,103), but it is not quite as low as Barre (\$3,919), Gardner (\$4,064), Phillipston (\$3,838), or Templeton (\$3,806). Hubbardston's average single-family home tax bill in the year 2010 was just \$2,791. Adjusting for inflation, this represents approximately a 24.8% increase over the last decade. Neighboring towns also experienced some rise in their average single-family home tax bills over the course of the last decade.

Table SF-2: Year 2020 Average Single-Family Home Tax Bill

Community	Average Single Family FY2020 Tax Bill
Hubbardston	\$4,135
Barre	\$3,919
Gardner	\$4,064
Phillipston	\$3,838
Princeton	\$6,093
Rutland	\$5,257
Templeton	\$3,806
Westminster	\$5,103

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue

As shown in Table SF-3 below, Hubbardston's 2020 average assessed valuation per household (\$278,987) is much higher than Gardner (\$205,881), higher than Barre (\$219,304), Phillipston (\$226,551), and Templeton (\$226,163) and lower than Rutland, Westminster, and much lower than Princeton (\$384,442). According to the 2018 ACS estimates, the median home value in Hubbardston is \$263,100.

The entire central Massachusetts region and eastern regions of the Commonwealth saw a dramatic rise in the average household valuation during the middle part of the last decade which peaked for many communities in 2007 and 2008, and Hubbardston is no exception. Hubbardston's average assessed valuation per household rose to its highest recorded value of \$287,856 in 2009. This was a time when values were high throughout the region, development was on the rise, and existing homes were selling for much more than they sold for during the 1990s.

In short, the region's housing stock had never been valued higher. Since that time, values have almost recovered to their peak from before the period of decline in the housing market. Hubbardston's average assessed value at its 2009 height was \$287,856, only just over 3% more than the current average assessed value of \$278,978.

Table SF-3: Year 2020 Average Assessed Valuation per Household

Community	FY2020 Assessed Valuation per Household
Hubbardston	\$278,987
Barre	\$219,304
Gardner	\$205,881
Phillipston	\$226,551
Princeton	\$384,442
Rutland	\$298,534
Templeton	\$226,163
Westminster	\$290,751

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Table SF-4 below indicates that residential property taxes account for 93.46% of the Town's tax base which is only lower than Princeton (95.83%) and Rutland (93.92%). It is higher than Barre (86.51%), Gardner (80.49%), Phillipston (93.20%), Templeton (90.31%), and Westminster (86.23%). In comparison to other years, Hubbardston's residential property reached a high of 96.07% in the year 2005 largely because residential development increased at a faster rate than economic development, similar to trends in neighboring communities.

Table SF-4: Year 2020 Local Tax Levies

Community	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Personal Property	Total Tax Levy	Res. as % of Total	CIP as a % of Total
Hubbardston	6,793,972	199,948	72,997	202,461	7,269,379	93.46%	6.54%
Barre	7,506,031	463,652	195,169	512,018	8,676,869	86.51%	13.49%
Gardner	22,445,233	2,495,607	1,317,252	1,626,115	27,884,208	80.49%	19.51%
Phillipston	3,357,768	123,856	10,650	110,622	3,602,897	93.20%	6.80%
Princeton	8,495,201	123,363	30,125	216,588	8,865,276	95.83%	4.17%
Rutland	15,870,541	358,308	77,878	591,615	16,898,343	93.92%	6.08%
Templeton	10,802,354	660,579	326,152	172,557	11,961,642	90.31%	9.69%
Westminster	15,884,912	1,032,426	710,284	793,128	18,420,750	86.23%	13.77%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Payment in Lieu of taxes (PILOT)

The DCR Watershed PILOT Program provides Hubbardston with a stable funding source to support vital services. The program guarantees consistent and reliable payments, which allows the town to plan, develop, and sustain essential services that contribute to the well-being of the community. The program also fosters collaboration between the DCR and Hubbardston.

Hubbardston's Watershed Management PILOT amount is determined by multiplying the Department of Revenue (DOR) valuation of the DCR Division of Water Supply Protection land by the local commercial tax rate. Residents can learn more by visiting <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/watershedpayments-in-lieu-of-taxes-pilot#pilot-values>. Watershed PILOTS are calculated as part of Local Receipts.

Solar PILOTS

Over the past 5 years, Hubbardston has worked with solar developers to develop Solar PILOT agreements. These payments exemplify the symbiotic relationship between innovation and responsible progress. The solar pilots, aptly named, symbolize a partnership where solar arrays generate clean power while also contributing to the town's economic vitality. As the sun's energy is harnessed and translated into electricity and community support, this financial impact underscores the town's dedication to a cleaner future. Solar PILOTS are calculated as part of the Tax Levy.¹

Table SF5: Solar PILOT

Company	FY23 Amount
KS Solar	\$37,614.95
Sune Solar	\$48,328.52
Old Westminster Solar	\$21,500.71
Old Westminster Solar 2	\$20,725.00
Williamsville Solar	\$2,779.84

Capital Improvement Plan

A capital budget is distinct from an operating budget in that the items included in a capital budget are typically large or infrequent expenses, such as construction of a new building or acquisition of a new dump truck, whereas an operating budget includes recurring expenses or are modest in magnitude, such as supplies or vehicle maintenance. A capital budget identifies the array of resources to be used to fund a series of capital projects. In many instances, municipalities establish minimum dollar thresholds for projects to be included in a CIP.

The FY2020 – FY2024 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Town of Hubbardston invests more than \$17.5 million into the community for a variety of goals, for example: upgrading roadways and bridges to ensure safe and comfortable travel, rehabbing community facilities such as the Center School and the Jonas Clark Library to better serve residents, and replacing worn out equipment used to accomplish the day-to-day operations of departments such as the DPW and Police Department.

The CIP identifies approximately \$15.2 million in non-local funds, a reflection of the Town’s focus on leveraging local dollars and human resources to pursue State grants and other funding for the betterment of the community. The Town has been very

¹ Information from Fiscal year 2023 Financial Summary

successful at getting local projects on the State’s Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).

The Capital Investment Strategy recommends a commitment of 6% of net operating budget to reinvest in capital projects. Such a commitment is in line with best practices, but also represents an achievable goal in line with the Town’s financial forecast and existing policies.²

The General Budget

The general budget funds the Police, Department of Public Works, Schools, Cemeteries, Debt Services, Council on Aging, Board of Health, Planning, Zoning, Conservation Commission, and all administrative functions of the Town. The budget is funded by aid from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, local receipts from motor vehicle excise tax, court fines, licenses, permits, and interest earned on investments, taxation, and revenue generated from solar leases.

Municipal Spending Per Capita

Figure SF1: FY23 Per Capita Municipal Spending Comparison

This graph demonstrates that Hubbardston spends less per capita than other similar-sized towns. The line (line-- regression) represents what an "average" town would spend based on population. As Hubbardston falls well below this line, it indicates that we spend less than would be predicted based on our town's size. This implies that we operate with a lean and efficient budget.

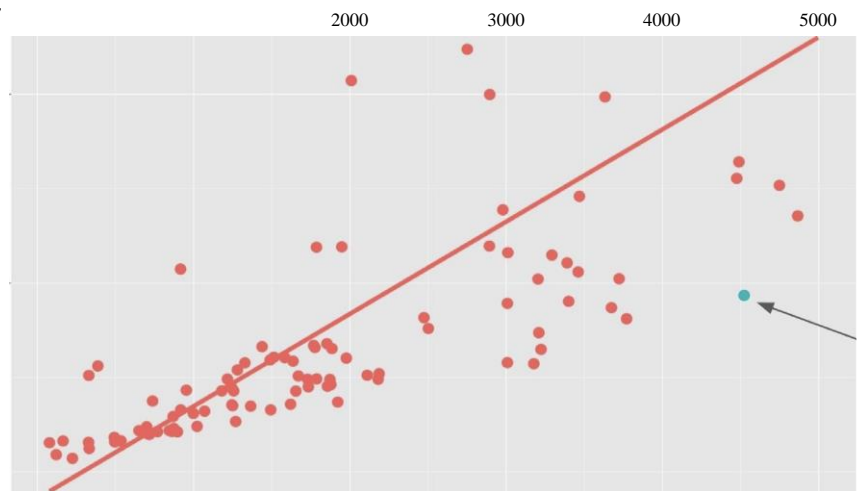


Figure SF1 illustrates where Hubbardston falls (green dot) with Municipal spending in comparison to other towns with less than 5000 residents. Hubbardston’s FY 23 budget was \$10,055,687. Over half of the budget went toward the school budget of \$5,767,770. Please refer to the town website for line-item budget details.³

² Hubbardston FY2020-FY2024Capital Improvement Plan

³ https://www.hubbardstonma.us/sites/g/files/vyhlf3276/f/uploads/atm_budget_presentation_june_2022_final.pdf

Section 3: Baseline Conditions

Local Government

Under the general direction of the Select Board, the Town Administrator, as Chief Fiscal Officer and Chief Procurement Officer, is appointed by and serves at the direction of the Select Board.

The Town Administrator prepares and manages an annual fiscal plan; plans for initiatives pertaining to the community and the economic growth of the Town; prepares long term projections for capital acquisition; acts as an advisor to various Town boards and commissions; administers collective bargaining agreements; and implements directives from the Select Board.

The Town Administrator also supervises Public Safety and directs the Police and Fire Departments; directs Public Works; municipal inspections and other assigned municipal departments, boards and commissions and ensures that all applicable laws, rules, and regulations are enforced.

Entities That Comprise Hubbardston's Town Government

This section is an overview of the various entities that comprise Hubbardston's municipal government. This is just a brief synopsis of each municipal entity and is not intended to provide a complete description. The general budget funds the Police, Department of Public Works, Schools, Cemeteries, Debt Services, Council on Aging, Board of Health, Planning, Zoning, Conservation Commission, and all administrative functions of the Town. The budget is funded by aid from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, local receipts from motor vehicle excise tax, court fines, licenses, permits, and interest earned on investments, taxation, and revenue generated from solar leases.

Boards & Committees

Agricultural Commission

The Agricultural Commission was established in 2006 with the mission to facilitate, encourage and promote agriculture opportunities in Hubbardston. In this effort, the Agricultural Commission acts a mediator for issues related to farming, works on the preservation of agricultural lands and initiatives that help to create or advance having a sustainable agricultural community while also placing a high level of importance on maintaining the rural character of Hubbardston.

Board of Assessors

The Assessors are members of the municipal finance team. Their responsibilities include maintaining the property database, valuing, and classifying property, committing taxes,

granting abatements and exemptions, managing special assessments and betterments, and administering the motor vehicle and trailer excise tax.

The Assessors establish the valuation and classification of property in accordance with standards set by Massachusetts General Laws using policies and procedures that promote good public relations, provide user friendly access to data, maximize resources, and maintain equity, accuracy, and fairness.

Each parcel is identified by a Parcel ID which consists of the map, block and lot numbers and is maintained in a database in the form of a Property Record Card (PRC), or field card. The PRC contains data about the parcel's value, use, land area, owner name and address, prior sales, and improvements (buildings, yard items, special features).

Tax maps are maintained in GIS format and are annually updated as of each January 1st with new recorded splits, subdivisions, surveys, and data changes. The Town of Hubbardston is divided into maps that show lot lines, zoning, and land areas only (no building or septic data are shown). *Maps are for assessment purposes only and are not valid for legal description or conveyance.* Hubbardston is included in the Mass GIS list of communities that are committed to maintaining standardized L3 parcel maps. Hubbardston uses the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's MR Mapper tool to view GIS data layers.

Board of Registrars

The Board of Registrars is a three-member elected board serving staggered three-years terms that oversees essential duties regarding elections and voting in Hubbardston. Among these responsibilities are:

- Receiving and certifying voter registrations prior to elections.
- Maintaining a list of inactive and active voters.
- Preparing voting lists for election day use.
- Presiding over an election recount.
- Certifying signatures of nomination papers.
- Certifying the number of registered voters in town prior to an election.

Select Board

The Select Board is composed of five members serving staggered three-year terms. The Select Board is governed by the Town Bylaws and the General Laws of Massachusetts.

The Select Board has the authority and responsibility to:

- Provide general policy direction.
- Issue administrative orders.

- Appoint and serve as hiring authority for approximately 20 boards, committees and officials who administer town government.
- Issue Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrants.
- Engage and Supervise Town Legal Counsel and approve actions in litigation.
- Authorize all borrowing and all expenditures, including payroll.
- Act as the Town Licensing Board, issuing alcohol, common victualers, class I, II & III, and earth removal permits.
- Publish the Annual Town Report.

The Select Board serve as Chief Executive of the Town of Hubbardston. As Hubbardston's principal elective officers, and in addition to their responsibilities under state and local law, the Select Board has general supervision over all matters that are not specifically delegated by law or by vote of the Town to some other officer or board. They are the only officers empowered to enter into contracts on behalf of the Town.

The Select Board has the authority and responsibility to provide general policy direction; issue administrative orders; appoint and serve as hiring authority for Town boards, committees, and officials who administer Town government; and issue Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrants.

The Board also supervises Town Legal Counsel and approves actions in litigation. The Town Counsel provides advice and legal documents for various Town officials and reviews contracts and agreements and procures documents for such purposes; advises and assists with personnel issues in the Select Board's Office, Fire Department, and the Police Department; and handles all litigations regarding the Town.

Board of Health

The Hubbardston Board of Health is a five-member elected board of volunteers serving staggered three-year terms. The Board of Health is tasked with maintaining the well-being of Hubbardston residents and is responsible for conducting and authorizing permits related to:

- Food sales
- Septic systems
- Trash hauling
- Other subjects that could impact public health.

Cable Advisory Committee

The mission of the Cable Advisory Committee, comprised of four members, is to inform and educate the residents of Hubbardston and to serve in the best interests of the community. To this end, the Cable Advisory Committee records and broadcasts local

government meetings, aids in the production of local events that are of special interest to the public and develops and enforces cable licenses for the benefit of the community. It also provides training and video production technology and services available to the public.

Capital Improvement Planning Committee

A 5-member committee that has 1 member from both the Finance Committee and the Planning Board that serve 1-year terms. The remaining 3 members are appointed by the Select Board to serve for 3-year terms. The role of this committee, as governed by town bylaws, is to be responsible for creating a capital plan every year which is submitted to the Town Administrator for review and is then forwarded to the Select Board and Finance Committee with recommendations.

This capital plan must be completed in a timely manner every year as to allow for time for consideration as part of the annual budget process and include the following:

- A list of all capital improvements proposed to be undertaken during each of the ensuing 5 years, with supporting information as to the need for each capital improvement.
- Cost estimates, proposed methods of financing and recommended time schedules for each improvement
- The estimated annual cost of operating and maintaining each facility and piece of major equipment is referenced in the plan.

Cemetery Commission

The Cemetery Commission is a three-member elected board that is responsible for both maintaining the Town's cemeteries and coordinating interment.

Community Preservation Committee

A 9-member committee established by a Special Town Meeting in 2007 composed of 3 Members-At-Large appointed by the Select Board and 1 member from each of the following town agencies appointed by their respective board or commission:

- Housing Authority
- Parks Commission
- Open Space Committee
- Planning Board
- Conservation Commission
- Historical Commission

The duties of the Community Preservation Committee are to study the needs, possibilities, and resources of the town regarding community preservation, working in

consultation and cooperation with existing municipal boards, hold an annual public informational hearing regarding community preservation. They shall make recommendations to the Town Meeting for any actions of acquisition, preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation for the purpose of community preservation along with the Committee's anticipated costs for said actions. Every fiscal year a recommendation must be made regarding the expenditure of funds either at the present or set aside for the future for open space, historic resources, and community housing of not less than 10% of the Community Preservation Committee revenues for each.

Cultural Council

The council is comprised of seven members, and awards grants to support arts enrichments in the school and the community. The mission of the Hubbardston Cultural Council is to promote excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences to improve the quality of life for Hubbardston residents and to contribute to the economic vitality of our community. It also allows for citizens and community businesses to make donations to the Council.

The Hubbardston Cultural Council, when issuing grants, gives priority to:

- Applicants that have secured a local venue.
- Projects that serve all ages with emphasis on unique programming directed towards the interests of the community.
- Projects that celebrate Hubbardston's history, agriculture, and rural character

Economic Development Committee

The Committee is made up of 7 members, who are appointed to three-year terms. A member of the Select Board and a member of the Planning Board shall be ex-officio members. The mission of the committee is to improve the community's quality of life through an expanded local business base that respects and contributes to Hubbardston's community character and improves the economic well-being of all its residents.

While respecting the environment and Hubbardston's unique wetlands, the Economic Development Committee envisions a community where an appropriate balance is achieved between residential and commercial / industrial tax revenues to support quality municipal and education services, moderate property taxes, and increase of property values for Hubbardston residents.

Economic development efforts will be planned to avoid or mitigate impacts that would detract from Hubbardston's character and rural setting. Business development and expansion should contribute to community life and serve community needs, fit in Hubbardston's small-town setting, be environmentally friendly, not strain local service

capacity, and build upon and foster Hubbardston's special attributes, which include:

- Small town atmosphere
- Route 68 and its easy access to Route 2
- Open space and undeveloped land
- Large expanses of publicly owned land
- Low tax rate and affordability
- Proximity to business activity in Gardner and neighboring towns.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has the charter to represent the citizens of Hubbardston with regard to the town budget. The committee has 5 members who serve 3-year terms and review the proposed budgets and issue a report with recommendations and detailed explanations on the budget and other related articles. The Finance Committee also reports its recommendations in the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

Historical Commission

The goal of the Hubbardston Historical Commission is to preserve and promote the historic assets and heritage of the Town of Hubbardston. It was established in 1973 at a Special Town Meeting and has 5 members that are appointed by the Select Board.

Human Resources Advisory Board

The Human Resources Advisory Board, created under the Town Charter in 2013, consists of a 5-member board that serve in staggered 3-year terms as appointed by the Select Board. The board is responsible for reviewing and updating all job descriptions of town employees and personnel policies of the town at least once every five years. A final report of the new and revised job descriptions and any recommendations for changes to personnel policies that are deemed advisable are to be presented to the Select Board.

Keep Hubbardston Beautiful Committee (KHB)

The Hubbardston Select Board made the KHB an official town committee in March 2022. The goal of the committee is to organize annual town wide cleanup events and to attract volunteers to assist in the cleanup.

Library Trustees

The Library Board of Trustees consists of six elected members each serving three-year terms. The Library Board of Trustees responsibilities include; establishing the mission and vision for the library, determining the policies that are implemented to govern the library, hiring, and evaluating the director of the library, and overseeing the general management of the library. These duties help to ensure that the local community is represented well, and the public is informed regarding their local library. The Library Trustees have just begun the process of updating the Hubbardston Library Strategic Plan.

Open Space Committee

The Open Space Committee is an 8-member committee appointed by the Select Board for 3-year terms. The purpose of the Open Space Committee is to seek grants, raise funds, propose expenditures, and seek several alternative and additional ways to successfully achieve and further the goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. It meets the last Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm in the basement meeting room of Hubbardston Library.

Parks Commission

The Parks Commission is a 5-member committee that serve in staggered terms and oversees activities and events that take place on town owned recreational facilities, among these are Curtis Recreation Field, Mt. Jefferson Conservation Area, Rainbow's End Playground, and the "Steele Waves" Skate Park.

Town Center Committee

The Town Center Committee is a town municipal committee created with the goal of revitalizing the town center with an emphasis on safety, preserving the local cultural of Hubbardston, and general beautification efforts.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee

The Hubbardston Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee shall serve as facilitators and supporters for the placement of a memorial dedicated to those who served during the Vietnam War era. The group welcomes volunteers, as well as input from the community. They are responsible for the design of the memorial, fundraising, and erection of the monument on the Hubbardston Town Common.

Land Use Boards and Committees**Conservation Commission**

The roles of the Conservation Commission are:

- Administer and enforce the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Hubbardston Non-Zoning Wetlands Bylaw.
- Help residents and other applicants to understand and comply with wetlands regulations, including assistance in filing for permits under state laws and local bylaws.
- Open space maintenance: develop and carry out management plans, trail walks and environmental talks, inspect parcels, hire, and supervise caretaker for Longley Acres, hay harvest and sale, fund raising.
- Open space acquisition: prepare relevant Town Meeting articles, obtain title searches and appraisals, apply for grants, meet with property owners, guide

developers required to set aside open space, track status of chapter 61, 61a and 61b parcels and comment on right of first refusal issues when parcels change status.

- Respond to requests for comments from other boards (Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Select Board, Board of Health, and Building Inspector). Participate in committees as required.
- Support for other state regulations: make maps available (flood insurance, rare species habitat, ACEC), review and comment on forest cutting and management plans, answer logging questions from the abutters and the public, comment on MEPA projects.
- Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Planning Board

The Town of Hubbardston's Planning Board is an active municipal government entity whose overall goal is to foster the development of the community. The Planning Board assists citizens and community leaders in directing future changes. The Planning Board facilitates the community's quality of life through housing, economic development, open space and recreation, transportation, and land use. The Planning Board encourages preservation of natural and historic landscapes and important land resources by promoting excellence in site development and design.

The Planning Board also:

- Reviews projects for compliance with the local zoning bylaw and the goals and objectives of the approved Master Plan.
- Reviews projects for compliance with the general stormwater bylaw.
- Issuance of permits, variances, site plan reviews, etc.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals (often referred to as the ZBA) acts in a quasi-judicial capacity in the following areas: The issuance of certain special permits, petitions for variances from the requirements of the Hubbardston Protective Zoning Bylaws, appeals from the acts of the Building Inspector, or from failure of the Building Inspector to act in response to a complaint from a citizen.

The Zoning Board of Appeals also has jurisdiction to act on applications for comprehensive permits for subsidized housing, in which it coordinates review of all other local boards except the Conservation Commission.

The Zoning Board of Appeals has power to receive testimony under oath. Most decisions of the ZBA may be appealed by an aggrieved to the District, Superior, or Land Court.

Town Departments

Accountant

The Town Accountant oversees books, and reviews bills for processing in accordance with state law and budget.

Animal Control Officer

The Animal Control Officer handles all animal incidents and is responsible for enforcing animal control laws. The Animal Control Officer may issue violations to pet owners based upon the conduct of the animals.

Building Department

The Hubbardston Building Department is responsible for providing a range of services to the residents of Hubbardston, including the issuance of permits, review of plans, and field inspection of projects. Individual inspectors are responsible for ensuring work sites are inspected and that all work being performed is in compliance with Massachusetts State Codes, Federal Guidelines, and the Town of Hubbardston's Bylaws.

Council on Aging

The Council on Aging is chartered to provide a variety of services including health & wellness, socialization, nutrition, safety, arts and crafts and financial protection. All are in support of a senior's right and ability to age-in-place. The Council is the primary contact point for many of the services offered by the state and regional service groups such as Montachusett Home Care, Nashoba Nursing and Meals-on-Wheels. The Council provides a full range of programs and services including meals, exercise, and socialization to all seniors 65 years old and above in Hubbardston.

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works is responsible for road and street maintenance, care and maintenance of Town trees, snow and ice removal, and maintenance of Town equipment and property, including Police and Fire equipment. They also issue driveway permits to town residents.

Emergency Management

Hubbardston's Emergency Management provides Hubbardston residents with emergency preparedness resources, emergency alerts, and information during and after emergencies and disasters. It coordinates with state and federal government agencies, non-profits, and businesses to prepare, respond, and recover from emergencies and disasters.

Fire Department

The mission of the Hubbardston Fire Department is a commitment to excellence in the service to the people in the Hubbardston community, by protecting the lives and property of the community from emergencies involving fire, medical, hazardous materials, and environmental causes.

The Fire Department is divided into three service divisions.

- Fire Services Division is responsible for all planning and delivery of Fire Suppression, Fire Prevention, Fire Investigation, Public Fire Education, Public Services, and non-EMS emergencies, such as Hazardous Material responses.
- EMS Services Division is responsible for all planning and delivery of Emergency and Non-Emergency Medical Services, including responding to Emergency Medical Calls and Public Medical Education. The Hubbardston Fire Department offers both Basic and Advanced Life Support transport services with two licensed Ambulances.
- Emergency Management Division is responsible for creating and maintaining the Emergency Management Plan for the town and providing for working across agencies in resolving disaster emergencies.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department provides information about and to personnel appointed to serve as staff members in the Town of Hubbardston.

Library

The Hubbardston Public Library Department is managed by a director and is assisted by two library staff members. The Library Department meets the first Thursday of each month.

Police

The mission of the Hubbardston Police Department is to enhance the quality of life throughout the Town of Hubbardston by reducing crime through prevention and enforcement, thereby creating a sense of security in the community, and eliminating the fear of crime. The department is also in charge of the emergency dispatch services within the jurisdiction of the Town of Hubbardston.

The Hubbardston Police Department is also responsible for the following programs:

- Kid Care ID Program
- Substance Abuse Education Program
- Bicycle Safety Course
- Gun Safety Course for Adults
- Gun Safety Course for Kids
- Computer & Internet Safety
- Buckle-Up Safety Program
- Driver Safety at Quabbin High School

- Halloween Safety conducted at the Center School
- Elderly Safety/File for Life Program
- I.D. Theft Education Program
- Adult Citizens Police Academy
- Youth Citizens Police Academy
- Children's Safety Handbook
- Children Awareness Programs
- Crime Prevention Programs
- Home Security Surveys
- Tel-A-Tend Computerized
- Telephone Reassurance Program
- "Click It or Ticket It"

Public Records

The Town of Hubbardston has four Records Access Officers (RAO) responsible for coordinating a response to requests for access to public records, assisting individuals seeking public records in identifying the records requested, assisting the custodian in preserving and managing public records, and preparing guidelines that enable requestors to make informed requests. The Town Clerk is the lead RAO and the Police, Fire and DPW each have their own RAO.

Recycling Center

As of 2022 the Hubbardston Recycling Center is closed and is not anticipated to re-open within the year. The Board of Health is working on re-establishing services to the Recycle Center as soon as possible.

Schools

Hubbardston is a part of the Quabbin Regional School District. Hubbardston is home to one school, the Hubbardston Center School, a public Center school on Elm Street. The Quabbin Regional Middle/High School located on South Street in Barre serves Hubbardston students from grade 6-12.

Hubbardston students are also eligible to attend the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School Located in Fitchburg. The school is a four-year technical high school that prepares students for higher education as well as entering the workforce. As of the 2021-2022 Monty Tech had a student enrollment of 1,452 with 43 coming from Hubbardston, grades 9-12.

The Hubbardston Center School

The Hubbardston Center School serves Hubbardston students from pre-K through fifth grade in an updated facility, complete with a media center, gymnasium, computer lab, outside play area, student-grown & managed vegetable garden, airy cafeteria, and window-filled classrooms for lots of natural light. The school building is located on Elm Street in the center of town, adjacent to the town's public safety facilities.

The Hubbardston Center School had a total student enrollment of 302 for the

2021-2022 school year.

Quabbin Regional Middle/High School

The Quabbin Regional Middle/High School is located on 109-acres on South Street in Barre, less than 2 miles from the town center. Quabbin Regional Middle/High School serves students in grades 6 – 12 from the towns of Barre, Hardwick, Hubbardston, New Braintree, and Oakham as well as school choice students from surrounding towns.

The campus includes the middle/high school building complete with an outdoor track, lighted athletic field, dedicated field hockey field, baseball, softball and soccer fields, a cross-country course for both varsity and JV competitions. Tennis and golf competitions are held off site. The campus also sports a pond for environmental study, a greenhouse for horticultural study, a vegetable garden with composting, an observatory for astronomy study, and an alternative energy trailer complete with photovoltaic cells, a wind turbine and solar hot water heating panels.

Within the building, art students have a diverse course selection, complete with a kiln for firing ceramic sculptures. The middle/high school also has fully equipped science labs for biology, chemistry, and physics. Students of World Languages, including French and Spanish are privileged to travel overseas to Europe and Asia to experience the cultures. ASL (American Sign Language) has recently been added to the program of studies. Drama enthusiasts participate in the drama club and perform in the 300-seat, acoustically designed auditorium. Music students, both voice and instrument, learn, perform, and compete with an award-winning curriculum.

The Quabbin Regional Middle/High School had a total student enrollment of 1,152 for the 2021-2022 school year.

Special Events Department

The Hubbardston Special Events Department oversees organizing and outreach for events within town such as the Hubbardston Fair, Dinghy Dash, the Hubbardston Light Fight as well as several other events.

Tax Collector

The town Tax Collector is responsible for mailing all tax bills and collecting both current and delinquent taxes.

Town Administrator

The Town Administrator serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Hubbardston and implements the policy directives of a three-member, elected Select Board.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Maintain complete records of his office and make reports to the Select Board when requested.
- Advise and recommend to the Select Board those needs, policies, programs and actions deemed necessary or expedient.
- Maintain jurisdiction and responsibility for all Town property but the schools.
- Maintain a purchasing function for the procurement of all supplies, materials, and equipment (except education supplies) and books for the libraries.
- With the approval of the Select Board, prosecute, defend, and compromise all litigation (except tax assessments and abatements) to which the Town is a party.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of those reporting to him or her and take actions necessary to achieve optimum performance levels.
- Prepare the Annual Budget for the consideration of the Select Board.
- Prepare necessary Articles for Town Meeting.
- Assume responsibility for negotiating collective bargaining agreements for labor units under his or her jurisdiction.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of those reporting to him or her and take actions necessary to achieve optimum performance levels.
- Make any investigations deemed necessary and perform other such duties consistent with his or her office.

In accordance with the Hubbardston Charter, the Town Administrator maintains a comprehensive inventory of all town property, including real estate and other assets. As outlined in the charter, bylaws, and other directives, the Town Administrator oversees the maintenance and repair of all town property under their supervision. To comply with the charter and optimize insurance coverage, maintenance expenses, and purchasing practices, the Town Administrator conducts a thorough audit of the entire town inventory at the start of each fiscal year. The complete List can be found at: <https://www.hubbardstonma.us/town-administrator/pages/town-inventories-and-land>

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's Office serves as the central information point for residents and visitors alike. The Town Clerk is the chief election official, recording official, registrar of vital records, public records official, and licensing officer. The Town Clerk oversees the polling place and the conduct of all elections and election-related activity and records all actions

of Town Meetings. The Clerk's Office maintains the municipal code, the official meeting postings for Town boards/committees/commissions, oaths of office, appointments, and resignations of all Town officials.

The Clerk's Office issues state licenses and permits, including marriage licenses, business licenses and renewals, dog licenses, raffle permits and certified requests for public documents. This office responds to inquiries from the public as well as from other departments, boards, and committees.

Treasurer

The town Treasurer is responsible for general financial oversight for the town. Their responsibilities include overseeing budgets, financial planning, bookkeeping, billing as well as several other financial services.

Tree Warden

The Tree Warden is responsible for overseeing and executing the maintenance of all public shade trees.

Veteran's Services

Veterans Services provides for the needs of veterans and their dependents who qualify for MGL Chapter 115 (Welfare for Veterans), including assistance in preparation of claims for compensation and pensions, medical care, and fuel assistance.

Public Facilities - Owned and Maintained by The Town

As a rural township that remained lightly settled for most of its history, Hubbardston did not have any publicly owned buildings until the construction of the Hubbardston Public Library in the early 1900s. Funded by the philanthropy of Hubbardston native Jonas G. Clark, founder of Clark University in nearby Worcester, this building became the central locus of municipal life in the community. The Second Empire brick building remains the most striking in the community, and serves a multifaceted role as a library, public meeting space, town offices, and other needs as they arrive. Previously the town would congregate at local churches, the most frequent being the First Parish Unitarian Church, which served as the traditional Meeting House for the community.

Eventually the Hubbardston Public Library, now called the Stevens Memorial Library, was joined by the Slade Building, currently functioning as the joint town offices, police building, and senior center, on 7 Main Street - only a brief jot out the door from the library. The Hubbardston Center School is located just behind the Stevens Memorial Library and This Main Street "complex" of the Hubbardston Center School, Slade Building, and Stevens Memorial Library represents a large portion of the public facilities owned by the Town, with only two Fire Stations (one of which is leased), the Department

of Public Works complex on 68 Worcester Road, and a garage for cemetery maintenance equipment being the other standing facilities.

As the Slade Building serves as the de facto town hall while also serving as the senior center and police station, it inevitably falls short of functioning as both a suitable public space and professional environment. Even with the Stevens Memorial Library being utilized as secondary offices and storage space, the need for dedicated facilities for the community in each of these functions is readily apparent so that they may better serve the residents to their furthest ability.

The poor condition of the municipal buildings is a prominent enough of a concern that it is amongst the top five problems that residents of the town have repeatedly identified as needing to be addressed, alongside aging infrastructure in general. Hubbardston has made progress on addressing these concerns in part, working to replace the old roof of the Stevens Memorial Library, and engaging in discussions with the state to swap land that would be better situated for building future municipal buildings on. Improvements needed for the DPW facilities have also been identified, providing a path forward for the community to work on addressing them as effectively as possible.

Table SF6: Primary Public Facilities

Building	Location
Slade Building	7 Main Street
Hubbardston Public Library	7 Main Street – Unit 8
Hubbardston DPW	68 Worcester Rd
Hubbardston Fire Station 1	36 Main St
Hubbardston Fire Station 2 (lease)	48 Gardner Rd
Hubbardston Center School	8 Elm St
Curtis Recreation Field	Gardner Rd



Hubbardston Town Offices/Slade Building



Stevens Memorial Library



Station Hubbardston DPW



Hubbardston Fire Dept. Station 1



Hubbardston Fire Dept. – Station 2 (HQ)



Hubbardston Center School



Curtis Recreation Field



4. Goals and Actions

Vision:

Provide excellent, cost effective, accessible facilities, services, and programs reflecting values respectful of all ages and diversity, which, through collaboration, contribute to a high quality, safe, civil, healthy, and sustainable community.

Goal SF1: Maintain, enhance, and identify ways to better utilize and improve municipal services and programs that serve the needs of the community.

- **Action SF1.1:** Establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee to oversee and carry out recommended goals and actions, holding periodic briefings about progress and any changes.
- **Action SF1.2:** Update and maintain ADA Self-Inventory and Transition Plan to ensure that public buildings and facilities are accessible to all people.
- **Action SF1.3:** Update and digitize existing maps and incorporate any missing facilities, features, or additional information that would be used by the town in any current and future work, planning activities, or the provision of services to the public.
- **Action SF1.4:** Develop a permitting guidebook which includes concise information and sources such as contacts, regulations, and forms.

Goal SF2: Maintain, enhance, and promote environmentally sound practices to provide high quality services and programs that serve the needs of all the residents of Hubbardston.

- **Action SF2.1:** Explore relocating or repurposing the existing Senior Center in the Slade Building to function as a general community building that the Council on Aging also makes use of.
- **Action SF2.2:** Develop a plan to build a new public safety building for the Hubbardston Police Department to use instead of having to share space with municipal offices. The current Slade Building is not suitable to meet the needs of the Police Department.
- **Action SF2.3:** Consolidate the town offices and departments into a singular building with space for storage and public meetings that will then serve as a dedicated Town Hall/Community Center that Hubbardston currently lacks.
- **Action SF2.4:** Expand the DPW facilities to meet the current needs, including additional garage sheds for sheltering equipment.
- **Action SF2.5:** Continue to explore and identify land to acquire that is suitable for additional municipal facilities to be located on.
- **Action SF2.6:** Explore the possibility for the development of municipal fiberoptic high-speed broadband internet network.

Goal SF3: Improve inter- and intra-committee communication to promote more efficient public administration and to better serve residents of the town.

- **Action SF3.1:** Identify strategies to implement mediation between committees.
- **Action SF3.2:** Identify possible changes to the town bylaws to make the committees' roles, responsibilities, and powers more explicit.
- **Action SF3.3:** Continue to provide training opportunities and materials for New Board, Committee and Commission Members.