WHAT'S GOING ON IN Dunstable?

FALL EDITION | NOVEMBER 2026

Financial Forecast Highlights Long-Term Budget Challenges

The Town recently completed its FY28-FY30 Financial Forecast, providing a high-level, preliminary look at projected revenues, expenditures, and financial trends. The forecast is intended to serve as a planning tool to help Town officials identify potential challenges and consider strategies before annual budgets are developed.

Based on assumptions at the time the forecast was authored, the forecast projects budget gaps of approximately $302,700 in FY28, $578,700 in FY29, and $610,000 in FY30, as a result of the continuing challenge of revenue growth lagging behind increases in operating costs. Education, employee benefits, insurance, utility, materials, and equipment costs, retirement and contractual obligations are some of the drivers of expenditure growth, while municipal revenues remain constrained by Proposition 2½.

The forecast also highlights several positive trends. The Town has significantly reduced its reliance on one-time revenues to balance annual budgets and has continued to strengthen reserves, helping improve its long-term financial position. Property taxes remain the Town's primary revenue source, accounting for nearly 88% of General Fund revenues.

It is important to note that the forecast represents a preliminary snapshot based on information available when it was prepared. Several revenue and expenditure assumptions have already changed since the forecast was developed, and additional changes are expected as budget discussions continue, school assessments are finalized, and state aid estimates are updated, among other things. As a result, the projections should be viewed as a planning tool rather than a definitive forecast of future budget scenarios.

The Town will continue using this multi-year forecast to support decision-making, guide financial planning discussions, evaluate capital investment priorities, and maintain a proactive approach to long-term fiscal sustainability.

FY26 Year-End Report Available to Review

The Town released its FY26 Year-End Report, providing an overview of the Town's finances during FY26. The report shows that the Town remained in a stable financial position. Total revenues reached $13.86 million, slightly exceeding budget projections, while year-end expenses totaled roughly $13.5 million, or 96.3% of the adjusted budget. Residents are encouraged to review the full report here: https://www.dunstable-ma.gov/town-administrator/pages/financial-reporting.

Town of Dunstable

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Private Well Workshop Helps Dunstable Residents Protect Their Drinking Water

Dunstable residents recently participated in a free educational workshop, "Safe Drinking Water in Private Wells," presented by Jim Starbard, Regional Director for RCAP Solutions. The program provided homeowners with practical information on private well maintenance, water quality testing, and protecting groundwater resources.

The workshop emphasized an important issue for many local households: unlike public water systems, private wells are the responsibility of the homeowner. Regular maintenance, testing, and awareness of potential contamination sources are essential to ensuring a safe and reliable drinking water supply.

Topics covered included:

- How private wells function and the different types of wells commonly found in Massachusetts.
- Proper well construction, maintenance, and protection of wellheads.
- Understanding well logs and groundwater sources.
- Potential contamination risks from both natural and human-made sources.
- Septic system management and its connection to groundwater quality.
- Recommended testing schedules and how to interpret laboratory results.

Participants learned about common contaminants that can affect private wells, including bacteria, nitrates, arsenic, manganese, lead, radon, and PFAS. Because many contaminants cannot be detected by taste, sight, or smell, regular testing remains the most effective way to ensure drinking water safety.

The workshop also highlighted a no-cost Private Well Testing and Assessment Program available through RCAP Solutions. Eligible homeowners may receive laboratory testing, an on-site well assessment, and recommendations for improving well performance and water quality. Residents interested in learning more about the assessment program can visit RCAP Solutions' private well program website at www.rcapsolutions.org/private-wells-regional.

For Dunstable residents who rely on private wells, the workshop's message was to make sure you know your well, test your water regularly, and take proactive steps to protect your drinking water supply for the future.

Residents who weren't able to attend the training can view the meeting presentation at https://www.dunstable-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif4361/f/uploads/homeowner_pw_training_2026-nashoba_boh.pdf.

RCAP Solutions

Union Building Progress Update

The Town continues to advance plans for the restoration and future reuse of the Union Building.

On October 14, the Union Building Rehabilitation Committee met to review and finalize interior design concepts and construction phasing options for the building's interior rehabilitation.

The project recently reached another milestone with the Select Board's approval of a $69,950 contract with Keen Independent Research to conduct a comprehensive reuse and feasibility study for the building. The study is funded through a $35,000 Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund, which required a one-to-one local match from the Town. Together, the grant and matching funds provide the resources necessary to evaluate the building's long-term potential and develop a financially sustainable path forward.

Over the coming months, the consultant team will work with Town officials, committee members, community organizations, residents, and other stakeholders to finalize a long-term vision for the building. The study will include a market analysis, evaluation of potential uses, assessment of partnership opportunities, review of potential governance models, and development of a business and operational plan to support long-term sustainability.

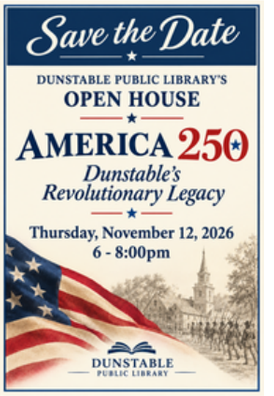
The planning effort will consider a variety of potential uses informed by prior resident engagement efforts, including community gathering space, arts and cultural programming, educational activities, and other opportunities.

Once completed, the study will provide the Town with recommendations regarding the building's future use, governance structure, operating model, financial sustainability, and implementation strategy. This project, along with the interior rehabilitation work, will help ensure that the Union Building becomes an active community asset in the future while preserving its historic character.

Save the Date: 250th Celebration and Open House at Library

The Dunstable Public Library invites the community to "America 250: Dunstable's Revolutionary Legacy" on Thursday, November 12, from 6:00 - 8:00 PM at the library. This free celebration is our opportunity to thank the community for its continued support and celebrate the library's progress. Guests will enjoy hors d'oeuvres, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages while learning more about recent library improvements and exploring our Special Collections, including the work underway to preserve and share Dunstable's history. We hope you'll join us for an evening of community, history, and celebration!

Please RSVP at https://forms.gle/L8NWQmst2zFZpVjt7 or by calling the Dunstable Public Library at (978) 649-7830 so we can plan accordingly. More details and information will be included with the formal invitation.



Stay Connected: CodeRED Emergency Notification System

CodeRED is the Town's new emergency notification system designed to help keep residents informed, prepared, and safe during emergencies and other events.

CodeRED allows the Dunstable Police Department, Fire Department, and other Town officials to quickly deliver information directly to residents through phone calls, text messages, emails, and mobile app notifications. Whether it is a severe weather event, road closure, public safety incident, water emergency, or other emergency, CodeRED provides a fast way for the Town to communicate important information when it matters most.

One of the system's key features is its ability to send notifications to specific geographic areas. Because contact information is linked to a street address, alerts can be targeted to only those neighborhoods or residents affected by an incident, while town-wide notifications can be sent when broader communication is needed.

Residents are encouraged to register for CodeRED and verify their contact information to ensure they receive alerts. This is especially important for mobile phone numbers, text messaging preferences, and email addresses. Users can also customize the types of notifications they receive, update their contact information at any time, or opt out of alerts if desired.

Creating an account is simple. Residents can visit the CodeRED registration portal at accountportal.onsolve.net/dunstablema, download the CodeRED mobile app from the App Store or Google Play, or text the keyword DUNSTABLE to 24639 to get started. Register today to help ensure you receive timely and accurate information during emergencies and other important community situations.

If you need assistance registering for CodeRED, please contact Town Hall at (978) 649-4514.

The Town strongly encourages all residents to sign up and make sure their information is up to date. Staying connected is one of the simplest and most effective ways to stay informed and help keep our community safe.

CODERED
By CRISIS24

Join the Town Administrator for questions, conversation, and coffee!

Join Dunstable Town Administrator Jason Silva for casual coffee and conversations at Farmhouse Cafe on Pleasant Street! This is a great opportunity to discuss any local issues and hear directly from Town officials.

Over the next couple of months, Jason will be holding coffee and conversations on Thursdays at 10 AM on the following dates: November 19 and December 17. Jason looks forward to seeing you there and don't forget, he's buying! Mark your calendars and bring your questions and ideas!

Second Annual Flat Rock Trail Race Raises More Than $5,000 for Humane Society

The second annual Flat Rock Trail Race brought runners, walkers, hikers, volunteers, and supporters together on June 13, 2026, for a successful day of outdoor recreation and community fundraising in Dunstable. Held under beautiful blue skies and ideal trail conditions, the event raised approximately $5,600 for the Humane Society for Greater Nashua. Proceeds from the event support the Humane Society for Greater Nashua's operating fund, helping provide care for animals in need while also offering low-cost services to the community.

Hosted on the scenic conservation lands managed by both the Dunstable Conservation Commission (DCC) and the Dunstable Rural Land Trust (DRLT), the race featured two options: a 5-Mile Trail Run/Walk/Hike and a 6-Hour Endurance Race, during which participants completed as many five-mile loops as possible within six hours.

Beginning and ending at the Stone Arch Bridge Conservation Area on High Street, the course showcased many of Dunstable's natural and historic landmarks. Participants traveled along the former Nashua, Acton and Boston Railroad bed, crossed the historic Stone Arched Bridge, passed through the former Ferrari Farm and granite quarry, climbed to the summit of the former Blanchard Hill Ski Area, and later reached Flat Rock Hill before returning to the start/finish area.

A total of 92 participants registered for the event. Race statistics showed a diverse field, with 52 percent female and 48 percent male participants. The 6-Hour Race attracted 78 percent of registrants, while 22 percent participated in the 5-Mile event. Racers ranged in age from 12 to 77 years old, with an average age of 45. The event drew competitors from throughout the region and beyond.

Approximately 81 percent of participants came from within 50 miles of Dunstable, while 16 percent traveled between 50 and 200 miles, and 3 percent traveled more than 200 miles to take part.

Participants enjoyed well-stocked aid stations, supportive volunteers, and a welcoming atmosphere throughout the day. All racers received commemorative finisher awards, while special recognition was awarded to top performers in both race formats.

Following the event, Race Director Rob Fiero and Jennifer LeBlanc of the Humane Society for Greater Nashua expressed their appreciation to the Dunstable Conservation Commission and Dunstable Rural Land Trust for helping make the fundraiser possible. They also discussed the possibility of returning in 2027.

With excellent weather, enthusiastic volunteers, strong community participation, and meaningful support for a worthy cause, the 2026 Flat Rock Trail Race proved once again to be a memorable event and a showcase for Dunstable's outstanding conservation lands.

Woodward's Mill Dam Raceway Repair Project Completed

The Town recently completed repairs to Woodward's Mill Dam, addressing a deteriorated section of concrete identified within the raceway roof. The project was funded through the Town's Community Preservation Act funds.

The raceway is a component of the dam structure and carries water through a concrete culvert beneath Pleasant Street. During inspections and assessments of the dam's condition, engineers identified an area of spalled and deteriorating concrete in the roof near the outlet of the raceway. To prevent further deterioration and extend the service life of the structure, the Town hired a contractor to complete targeted repairs.

The repair work involved removing loose and deteriorated concrete, cleaning and protecting exposed reinforcing steel, installing supplemental reinforcement where necessary, and pressure-injecting high-strength, non-shrink grout into the repair area. The completed repair restored the structural integrity of the affected section and protected the raceway from further deterioration in this area.

Following a competitive procurement process, the Town awarded the project to Xtreme Shotcrete, LLC for $18,395. The work was scoped and overseen by Hoyle Tanner Associates, with construction completed in accordance with plans and specifications developed for the project.

Although small in scale, the repair helps protect an important structure and reduces the likelihood of more extensive and costly damage in the near term. However, this work should be viewed as an interim repair rather than a long-term solution. The Town recognizes that the dam and raceway system will require a more substantial rehabilitation effort and significant future investment to address aging infrastructure and ensure its long-term viability. The Town continues to evaluate options and pursue funding opportunities to support those future improvements.

BEFORE



AFTER



Recognizing our dedicated volunteers and employees

Making a Difference is a peer-to-peer employee and volunteer recognition program

The Town created Making a Difference, a monthly peer-to-peer recognition program to celebrate and acknowledge the amazing work taking place within the walls of Town Hall, and outside of Town Hall, to make a difference in our community.

Many volunteers and employees have been recognized through this program, nominated by a colleague, a volunteer member of a board or committee, or a supervisor to recognize the difference they are making in Dunstable.

For the months of July and August, the following employees and volunteers have been celebrated through this program:



July

Dunstable Summer Concert Series Committee for another amazing summer of free concerts

Matthew Raymond for assisting the town with a manhole fix

Jean Haight for her extensive volunteerism with the Town, historical society, and Council on Aging

August

Barbara Martin for her many years of service on the Council on Aging Board

"Roads Team" aka Highway Department for their help at Flat Rock Conservation Area and the Stone Arch Bridge

Free Notary Services at Town Hall

Did you know Dunstable residents can access free notary services at Town Hall through the Town Administrator and Town Clerk's office?

Appointments are recommended to ensure availability. Please contact Town Hall to schedule.

Another Successful Municipal Citizens Academy

The Town recently completed its third annual Municipal Citizens Academy, a six-week program designed to provide residents with an overview of local government and the services the Town provides. A total of 12 residents registered and participated in the program.

The program was held between September 10 and October 15 at the Dunstable Public Library and offered participants the opportunity to hear directly from Town staff, department heads, and elected officials about the responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities facing local government. Sessions covered a variety of topics, including general government, schools, public safety, municipal finance, library and health services, and state government.

The Town hopes that throughout the program, participants gained a greater understanding of how local services are delivered, how budgets are developed, and how boards, committees, and departments work together to serve residents.

One of the Town's goals in creating the Citizens Academy was to increase resident engagement and government transparency while encouraging residents to become more involved in local government. Whether through volunteering, serving on boards and committees, attending public meetings, or simply becoming more informed about Town operations, engaged residents play a vital role in maintaining a strong and vibrant community.

Thanks to all the residents who participated, as well as the many staff members, department heads, and board members who contributed their time and expertise throughout the six-week program. The positive response to the Citizens Academy over the years has generated interest in offering similar educational and engagement opportunities in the future.



FY27 Goals and Priorities Finalized

The Dunstable Select Board has established its FY27 Goals and Objectives, providing a roadmap for the year ahead and helping guide municipal operations, capital investments, and planning initiatives. The plan focuses on six key areas: communication and transparency, employee development, financial sustainability, infrastructure and capital planning, operational improvement, and long-term strategic planning.

Building upon the accomplishments of FY26, including securing more than $1.29 million in grant and earmark funding, the Town will continue pursuing initiatives that seek to strengthen local services while reducing the financial burden on taxpayers through external funding opportunities.

Several FY27 priorities focus on enhancing communication and resident engagement through improved outreach, greater transparency, and expanded opportunities for public participation. The Town will also continue efforts to strengthen long-term financial planning, improve operational efficiency, and leverage technology to better serve residents.

Infrastructure and capital projects will remain a major area of focus. Initiatives include advancing the Union Building rehabilitation and reuse planning efforts, pursuing Town Center and transportation improvements, continuing to advance the PFAS Mitigation Project in the high school neighborhood, and implementing projects identified through the Town's Capital Improvement Plan.

The FY27 goals also emphasize strategic planning and community resilience, including efforts related to housing, climate resilience, grant development, and implementation of previously adopted plans and studies.

Together, these objectives will help guide the Town's efforts to maintain high-quality municipal services, preserve community assets, invest in our infrastructure, and ensure Dunstable pursues strategies to improve the Town's financial position for the future. Progress on these goals will be reviewed throughout the year as the Town works to address its current needs and also remain focused on long-term priorities.



Town Center Projects Continue to Move Forward

At its October 5 meeting, the Town Center Working Group reviewed updates on the Route 113 Complete Streets Redesign Project, the proposed Town Center Community Path, and implementation of the Town Center Visioning Report recommendations.

As part of this effort, consultants from GPI provided an update on the Route 113 Complete Streets Redesign Project. The project seeks to improve safety and accessibility along Main Street by addressing gaps in pedestrian infrastructure and evaluating improvements that support all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and individuals with mobility challenges.

The Working Group also received an update from Nitsch Engineering regarding conceptual plans for a Town Center Community Path. The proposed path would create new connections between neighborhoods, schools, recreation facilities, conservation areas, and other community destinations. Throughout the discussion, members emphasized the importance of balancing accessibility and connectivity with the preservation of Dunstable's natural and rural character.

The Working Group discussed with NMCOG strategies for transitioning the recommendations contained in the Town Center Visioning Report into implementation. The report identified several priority areas, including pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, traffic and roadway improvements, public spaces, wayfinding, environmental stewardship, and opportunities to further strengthen the Town Center as a focal point for community activity.

In addition to discussing the projects themselves, the Working Group reviewed public engagement strategies and ways to keep residents informed as planning and design efforts continue. Future outreach opportunities will include public meetings, community events, newsletters, and other engagement activities.

While projects remain in the planning and conceptual design stages, the Town Center Working Group's efforts ensure continued progress toward implementing the community-driven recommendations in prior planning studies. Residents are encouraged to stay engaged and participate in the process to advance these projects! You can stay up to date by visiting the Dunstable Connected website at https://engage.nmcog.org/dunstable.

Dunstable Community Power Supply Rates Update

Dunstable Community Power participants will see new electricity supply rates take effect beginning in December 2026, with the updated rates appearing on January electric bills. The new rates will remain fixed through December 2028, providing participants with two years of price stability.

Under the new contract, the Dunstable Standard option rate will change from 14.074 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to 16.545 cents/kWh, while the Dunstable 100% Green option will change from 16.914 cents/kWh to 18.969 cents/kWh. Both rates were secured through a competitive procurement process and reflect changes in regional energy market conditions since the Town's original contract was executed in 2025.

Despite the increase, the Dunstable Standard option remains below National Grid's current residential Basic Service rate of 17.185 cents/kWh, while the 100% Green option continues to provide electricity generated entirely from renewable energy sources located in the New England region.

Since its launch in June 2025, Dunstable Community Power has generated more than $100,000 in savings for participating residents and businesses compared to National Grid's Basic Service rates, although future savings cannot be guaranteed.

No action is required for current participants. Residents will remain enrolled in their existing program option unless they choose to make a change. Participants may switch between the Standard and 100% Green options, or opt out of the program entirely, at any time without fees or penalties.

It is important to note that Dunstable Community Power only affects the electricity supply portion of an electric bill. National Grid will continue to deliver electricity, maintain infrastructure, respond to outages, and provide customer service and billing.

Residents seeking additional information about the program can visit DunstableCommunityPower.com or contact program customer support at 800-818-9409.



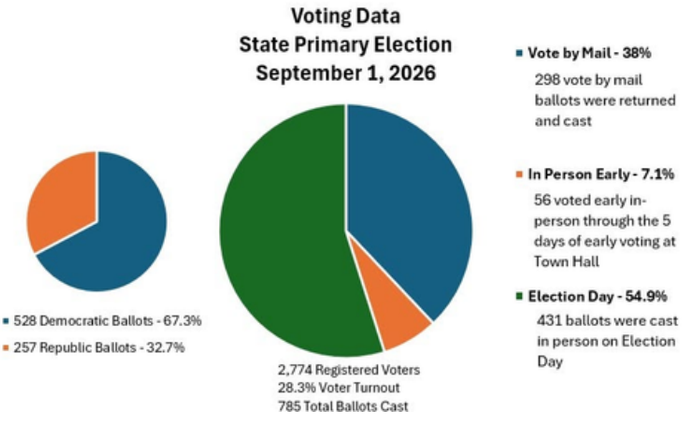


Price information	CURRENT	NEW	Compare to National Grid
Price	**14.074 ¢/kWh**	**16.545 ¢/kWh**	**17.185 ¢/kWh** - residential. **15.568 ¢/kWh** - commercial. **21.748 ¢/kWh** - industrial.
Price period	December 2025 to December 2026	December 2026 to December 2028	August 1, 2026, to January 31, 2027, residential & commercial. November 1, 2026, to January 31, 2027, industrial.

State Primary Election Results Certified

The official results of the September 1, 2026 State Primary Election have been certified. A total of 785 ballots were cast by Dunstable voters, representing a 28.3% voter turnout. Voters utilized all voting options available, with 298 ballots cast by mail, 56 ballots cast during early in-person voting, and 431 ballots cast in person on Election Day.

The Town also extends its appreciation to the Town Clerk's Office and the dedicated election workers whose preparation, professionalism, and long hours helped ensure a smooth, secure, and successful election process.



Dunstable Joins Devens Regional Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Program

Residents now have access to the Devens Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center, providing a convenient and environmentally responsible option for disposing of household hazardous waste throughout the year.

Through participation in this regional program, Dunstable residents can safely dispose of materials that should never be placed in household trash, poured down drains, or discarded in the environment. Accepted materials include paints, stains, solvents, automotive fluids, pesticides, herbicides, pool chemicals, cleaning products, and many other common household hazardous wastes.

One of the greatest benefits of joining the program is the regular availability of collection services. Unlike traditional one-day collection events, residents can access the facility twice each month from March through December, on the first Wednesday and the following Saturday of each month from 9 AM to 1 PM, weather permitting. This provides residents with 20 collection days annually to safely dispose of hazardous materials at their convenience.

Residents are encouraged to visit www.devenshhw.com before visiting the facility to review accepted materials, disposal fees, collection schedules, and site requirements. Please note that payment is accepted by cash or check only, and proof of residency may be required.

The Town is excited to expand disposal options for residents through this regional partnership and encourages homeowners to take advantage of this valuable service.

New COA Facebook Page is Live!

Dunstable's Council on Aging has launched a new Facebook page, Dunstable COA: Active Aging for Residents 55+, to better connect residents with information, resources, programs, and events that support adults age 55 and older.

The page will feature updates on Council on Aging activities, wellness and social programs, educational opportunities, community resources, and other services designed to help older adults remain active, engaged, and informed. Residents, family members, and caregivers are encouraged to follow the page and share it with others who may benefit from the information.

Dunstable Oktoberfest 2026 was a hit!

Dunstable's 3rd Annual Oktoberfest brought residents, families, businesses, and community organizations together for another successful day of fun, fitness, and community spirit.

The day kicked off with the annual Oktoberfest 5K, which drew close to 140 runners and walkers of all ages. Following the race, participants enjoyed an afternoon of food, refreshments, games, and activities organized by the Recreation Commission. Food vendors included Dinner Made Simple, Las Lemonade, and Caity Caity the Ice Cream Lady, while The Beer Guy served beverages throughout the event. Attendees also enjoyed family-friendly games and a popular 50/50 raffle.

Events like Oktoberfest are only possible through the support of dedicated sponsors, volunteers, staff, and community members. The Town extends its sincere appreciation to this year's sponsors for their generous contributions:

- **McGovern Automotive** for their generous sponsorship of the event, including 5K shirts, public safety details, tables, chairs, and many of the operational expenses necessary to make the event a success.
- **Mass Crane & Hoist** for sponsoring event beverages.
- **Powerhouse Portables** for providing portable restroom facilities.
- **West Automotive** for sponsoring the 5K winners' circle prizes.
- **Blood Realty** for sponsoring finish-line refreshments.

The Town would also like to thank the many volunteers, Recreation Commission members, Town staff, public safety personnel, vendors, participants, and attendees who contributed their time and energy to make the event possible. Their efforts helped create another memorable community celebration and continue to make Oktoberfest one of Dunstable's signature annual events.



Larter Field Master Plan Creates Vision for the Future

The Parks Commission has completed the Larter Family Memorial Field Master Plan, a long-range planning document that will help guide future improvements to one of the community's most heavily used recreational assets. The plan was prepared by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) and Bobrek Engineering and Construction and funded through Community Preservation Act funding and the District Local Technical Assistance Program.

Since its opening, Larter Field has served as the center for youth sports, recreation, community events, and outdoor activities. Recognizing the need to address aging facilities, accessibility improvements, and recreational needs, the Parks Commission undertook a comprehensive planning process that included technical analysis, engineering assessments, public outreach, and a community survey. More than 180 residents participated, providing valuable input on the field's future.

The Master Plan creates a vision for Larter Field as a community gathering space that balances recreation, wellness, and community connection while maintaining the site's character. Residents expressed strong interest in enhancing walking opportunities, increasing shade and seating areas, improving playground facilities, and creating additional spaces for families and community gatherings.

To achieve these goals, the plan recommends a phased approach to future improvements. Initial efforts will focus on addressing field stabilization and infrastructure needs, including areas affected by subsurface settlement. Future phases may include a new universally accessible playground, a multi-purpose pavilion and gathering space, improvements and expansion of walking paths and pedestrian connectivity, rehabilitation of existing athletic facilities, and consideration of new recreational amenities such as water play features.

While the Master Plan provides a vision and framework for future investments, it is not a construction schedule. It will serve as a roadmap for capital planning, grant applications, fundraising efforts, and future decision-making. As opportunities arise, the Town will evaluate priorities, seek outside funding, and determine the most appropriate path forward for implementing the plan's recommendations.

Completion of the Master Plan represents an important milestone in ensuring that Larter Field continues to meet the needs of residents today while creating opportunities for future generations to enjoy this recreational asset.



You can view the Master Plan and other documents about Larter Field here: https://www.dunstable-ma.gov/parks-commissioners/pages/larter-field-stabilization-and-master-plan-project.

PFAS Mitigation Project Continues

The Town, working with Groton and Pepperell officials, continues to make significant progress on implementation of the PFAS Mitigation Project, a regional effort designed to provide a long-term drinking water solution for residents affected by PFAS contamination at the Groton Dunstable Regional High School and surrounding neighborhoods.

Construction activities have advanced steadily throughout the fall, with water main installation completed along portions of Groton Street and Reedy Meadow Road, including hydrant installation and paving restoration. Water quality testing on newly installed infrastructure has been successfully completed, allowing the project team to move forward with service connections and the next phase of construction.

Work has since progressed to the Jersey Street and Lowell Road area in Pepperell, where crews continue installing new water infrastructure and coordinating with utility providers and neighboring communities. The project team has also begun outreach and pre-construction site visits with property owners to review service connections, document existing conditions, and discuss individual well and irrigation system considerations. This work will continue over the next several weeks.

Once complete, the Town hopes the project will provide affected residents with access to a reliable public water supply, reducing dependence on private wells impacted by PFAS contamination. The Town appreciates the patience and cooperation of residents during construction and will continue providing updates as additional phases of the project move forward.

For the most up-to-date information on the project, please visit the project website at https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/080f95d93c0f45198721f1c09e75d418.

Phase 1 of Library HVAC Upgrades Completed; Town Pursues Funding for Next Phase

The Town has successfully completed Phase 1 of the Dunstable Public Library HVAC Improvement Project, a major investment aimed at replacing aging, failing equipment, improving energy efficiency, and modernizing the Library's heating and cooling systems.

The project replaced and upgraded 3 HVAC units serving different areas of the Library, including the children's area, main library reading and book collection spaces, and the archive room. The new systems use high-efficiency heat pump technology, helping the Library transition away from fossil fuel-based heating.

Prior to the project, the Library relied on original natural gas boilers, aging air handling equipment, and outdated controls that were approaching or exceeding their useful life. Phase 1 addressed some of the most critical equipment needs while laying the groundwork for Phase 2 of the project.

The project was funded through a combination of Community Preservation Act funds, an FY26 State Budget earmark, Town capital funding, and net metering revenues. These funding sources allowed the Town to advance a project with a total estimated cost of approximately $235,000 without placing the full burden on local taxpayers.

While the completion of Phase 1 represents a significant milestone, additional work remains. Several portions of the building continue to be served by existing boiler-based heating systems, and future phases will focus on converting the 2 remaining air handling units to heat pump technology and modernizing building controls.

To help advance the next phase of the project, the Town recently submitted an application in this fall's Green Communities grant round. If awarded, the grant would help offset project costs and continue the Town's efforts to improve the energy performance and long-term sustainability of municipal facilities.

Completion of Phase 1 marks another important step in maintaining and improving the Dunstable Public Library. The Town will continue to work toward implementation of Phase 2 of the improvements.

Town Awarded Wellness Grant for Employee Development

The Town recently received a $2,500 wellness grant through the MIIA Wellness Program to support an upcoming employee retreat and team-building workshop. The program will be facilitated by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) and will focus on strengthening communication, collaboration, and workplace engagement among Town staff.

The workshop will bring employees together for professional development activities designed to support teamwork and organizational effectiveness. Through this initiative, the Town continues its work to invest in its workforce and foster a positive, collaborative work environment that ultimately benefits both employees and the community.

MIIA | Nonprofit Locally based Member driven

Serving Massachusetts communities since 1982

Green Communities Grant Projects Completed

The Town recently completed a series of energy-efficiency improvements funded through a $148,000 Green Communities Competitive Grant awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources. The project included LED lighting upgrades and weatherization improvements at Town Hall, the Dunstable Free Public Library, and the Highway Department Garage.

The improvements replaced aging lighting systems with energy-efficient LED fixtures while also addressing air leakage, insulation deficiencies, and weatherization needs throughout the 3 facilities. The lighting upgrades alone are projected to reduce municipal electricity consumption by approximately 31,400 kilowatt-hours annually, helping lower operating costs and reduce the Town's environmental footprint.

The project was completed in partnership with Energy Conservation, Inc. and leveraged utility incentives from National Grid, allowing the Town to maximize the impact of state grant funding while minimizing costs to local taxpayers.



State Earmarks to Support Public Safety and Technology Upgrades

The Town will receive $45,000 in state earmark funding included in the FY27 State Budget to support important public safety and municipal technology investments. The funding includes $20,000 for the Dunstable Police Department to purchase bullet-proof vests and $25,000 for municipal improvements. The Town is grateful to State Senator Vanna Howard and State Representative Margaret Scarsdale for their advocacy and support in securing these funds for Dunstable.

The police earmark will be used to replace bullet-proof vests used by the Police Department, which are nearing the end of their useful life. For the municipal improvement earmark, the funding is planned to be used for two technology investments: replacement of the Town's assessing software system with a modern cloud-based platform and replacement of the Fire Department's server infrastructure. Both projects address important operational needs and help reduce future technology risks and maintenance challenges.

The Town extends its appreciation to Senator Vanna Howard and Representative Margaret Scarsdale for securing these funds and their support in advancing these important investments for the community.



Help Protect Waterways This Fall: Dispose of Leaves and Yard Waste Properly

As leaves begin to fall, residents are reminded that yard waste should never be dumped or stored near wetlands, streams, ponds, waterways, or storm drains.

While leaves are a natural part of the environment, they contain nutrients that act as a natural fertilizer. When large amounts of leaves and grass clippings wash into waterways, those nutrients can contribute to water pollution, reducing water quality and potentially harming fish, wildlife, and other aquatic life. Improperly discarded leaves and yard waste can also clog storm drains, culverts, and drainage channels, increasing the risk of localized flooding during heavy rain events.

Residents are encouraged to compost leaves and yard waste on their property whenever possible or utilize approved disposal options. Taking a few extra steps to properly manage yard waste helps protect Dunstable's rivers, streams, wetlands, and drinking water resources while reducing flooding risks throughout the community.

For additional information and yard waste management tips, please review the Town's Yard Waste Information Flyer available on the Town website: https://www.dunstable-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif4361/f/pages/yard-waste-flyer-8.5x11.pdf.



Stay updated on what's happening in Town

Stay updated on what's happening in the Town of Dunstable and the work of your local government! There are many ways to stay informed:

- Sign up to receive email notifications on our website, www.dunstable-ma.gov/subscribe, provide your email in the appropriate fields, and check off any notices you would like to receive.
- Follow us on Facebook: @dunstablema and Instagram: @townofdunstable
- Subscribe to our YouTube Channel: @townofdunstable3179
- Follow us on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/town-of-dunstable/
- Follow us on Nextdoor at Town of Dunstable

Get Involved! Join a Town Board or Committee

The Select Board is still seeking volunteers for several Town boards and committees. Now is the perfect time to step up and serve. We're looking to fill vacancies and welcome new voices across a wide range of committees.

We have opportunities for residents of all backgrounds and interests. Whether you have a few hours a month or more time to give, the Town could benefit from your experience, expertise, insight and commitment.

Interested? Send an email to select-board@dunstable-ma.gov.

Dunstable Awarded State Recycling Grant

The Town has been awarded $3,360 through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP). The funding is provided through the Commonwealth's Recycling Dividends Program and recognizes communities that implement programs supporting recycling, waste reduction, and sustainable materials management.

Dunstable earned the award by meeting program criteria established by MassDEP, including initiatives that promote responsible waste management and recycling. The grant funds may be used to support local recycling programs, public education and outreach efforts, organics diversion, equipment purchases, and other eligible waste reduction initiatives.

The Town appreciates the continued efforts of residents to recycle responsibly and reduce waste, helping Dunstable qualify for this funding and support statewide environmental goals.

New Forestry Fire Truck Ordered

The Town is moving forward with the replacement of the Fire Department's 1986 forestry truck following the execution of a contract with Rebel Strike, LLC for the purchase of a new forestry vehicle. The current truck has served the community for nearly 40 years and has become increasingly difficult and costly to maintain.

The new vehicle is specifically designed for brush fires, wildland incidents, and off-road emergencies and will provide modern safety features, improved firefighting capabilities, and enhanced reliability. Delivery is anticipated in approximately eight months, at which time the vehicle will enter service and replace the Department's existing forestry truck.

As a reminder, the project is being funded primarily through a $285,000 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant, with the Town providing a required $15,000 local match.

Have You Heard?

Did you know that plans are moving forward for a new restaurant in Dunstable?

"Dunstable Pizza" is working to open at 207 Pleasant Street, bringing another dining option to the community. As part of the approval process, the business is seeking a Beer and Wine Liquor License from the Select Board.

There will be a hearing on the liquor license application at an upcoming Select Board meeting. The Town looks forward to welcoming Dunstable Pizza and other new businesses that contribute to Dunstable's local economy and community.

Roof Replacement Project at Swallow Union Continues to Advance

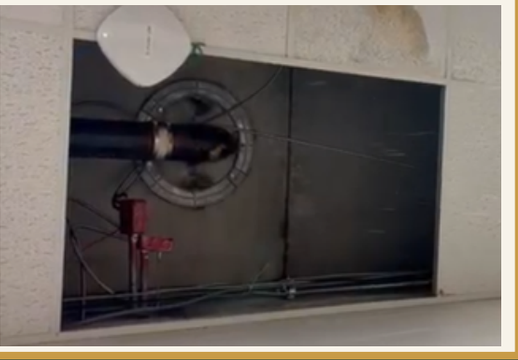
As some in the community may already be aware, the roof at Swallow Union Elementary School has required ongoing repairs over the past several years. The district has worked to address leaks and related issues as they arise, but this is becoming increasingly challenging and ineffective. These efforts have helped provide short-term management, but continued repairs are no longer a sustainable long-term solution. Addressing the roof issues is an important priority to protect the school building and preserve this community asset for years to come.

In recognition of this need, the district applied to the Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) Accelerated Repair Program and was invited into the program on October 29, 2025.

The MSBA Accelerated Repair Program provides an opportunity for eligible school districts to receive partial state funding for critical repairs and replacements, including roof projects. Although the community must authorize funding for the full project budget, MSBA reimbursement can offset a significant portion of those costs, reducing the project's ultimate net cost to the community.

The district is currently completing the schematic design phase, which will be submitted to the MSBA for review and approval. As the project progresses, additional information about the proposed scope of work, anticipated costs, state funding, and local funding requirements will be shared with the community.

Repairing the roof is an important investment in maintaining a safe, functional, and well-maintained school building. The district will continue working through the MSBA process and keeping the community informed as the project moves forward.



Dunstable Police Department Earns Re-Accreditation

The Town is pleased to announce that the Dunstable Police Department has once again been awarded full accreditation by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC). The Commission voted on September 9, 2026, to grant accreditation status to the Department for an additional 3-year period through October 2029.

Police accreditation is a voluntary program that evaluates law enforcement agencies against a comprehensive set of professional standards covering policies, procedures, training, operations, and best practices.

Re-accreditation demonstrates the Department's continued commitment to professionalism, accountability, and high-quality police services.

In its notification letter, the Commission recognized the Department's ongoing commitment to delivering exemplary police services and commended the department-wide effort required to maintain accredited status. The Commission also acknowledged the leadership of Chief Erik Hoar throughout the process.

The Town congratulates the members of the Dunstable Police Department on this accomplishment and thanks them for their continued dedication to serving the community.

Ambulance Service Evaluation Continues

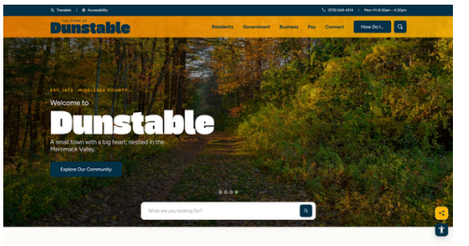
The Town, led by the Fire Chief, continues to evaluate options for enhancing emergency medical response services in Dunstable. Over the past several months, the Fire Chief and Town staff have held preliminary discussions with neighboring communities, the Town's current ambulance provider, Pridestar/Trinity, and other service providers to better understand available options, service models, and potential opportunities for improvement.

The goal of this effort is to assess how ambulance services can best meet the community's current and future needs while improving emergency response for residents. Discussions have focused on response capabilities, service levels, operational considerations, and potential costs associated with various approaches.

This work remains in the information-gathering and evaluation stage. Once the Town has a clearer understanding of the available options, associated costs, and potential service improvements, recommendations will be presented to the Select Board for review and discussion. Any future changes to ambulance service delivery would be considered through a public process, with opportunities for input and discussion.

New Town Website Launch Expected in November

The Town's new website is currently in the final stages of development and quality assurance testing. After testing is complete, Town staff will begin training and finalize additional content before the site goes live. The anticipated launch date is November 2026. The new website will feature improved navigation, enhanced accessibility, a modern design, and easier access to Town information and services. The Town looks forward to sharing more details in the coming weeks and launching a website that better serves residents, businesses, and visitors.



Firefighter Memorial Approved

The Select Board recently approved the installation of a Firefighter Memorial on the grounds behind Town Hall to honor the service and sacrifice of Dunstable firefighters. The final location will be determined in consultation with the Town Administrator, Select Board Chair, Fire Chief, and Monuments and Memorials Committee. Additional details will be shared as the project moves forward. Thank you to all the volunteers and donors for making this project possible.





T-Mobile Cell Equipment Project Update

The Town has received an updated status report on T-Mobile's cell equipment installation project at the water tank on Pleasant Street. After several months of delays related to utility connections, T-Mobile has informed the Town that a power circuit has now been secured and project materials are on the way to the site. As a result, construction activities are expected to resume in the coming weeks.

Earlier in the year, T-Mobile advised the Town that the project timeline had been impacted by delays associated with electrical service installation. Although the site itself had been prepared and ready for the next phase of work, the project was awaiting utility infrastructure needed to support the telecommunications equipment. Those delays pushed the anticipated antenna installation into late 2026 or early 2027.

The recent update indicates that utility coordination has progressed and that crews are preparing to remobilize at the water tank site. While additional work remains before the telecommunications equipment can be fully installed and activated, the latest developments represent an important step forward.



As a reminder, the Town's lease agreement with T-Mobile requires annual lease payments to begin once a building permit is issued for the project, regardless of whether the telecommunications equipment is operational. Under the terms of the lease, T-Mobile's initial annual lease payment is $30,000, with annual increases of 3% thereafter for the term of the lease agreement. The Town has now received the first 2 lease payments required under the agreement, generating revenue while the project continues to move through the construction process.

Once completed, the installation is expected to improve T-Mobile wireless coverage and network capacity in Dunstable and the surrounding area while providing an ongoing source of lease revenue to the Town. Additional updates will be provided as construction progresses and a more definitive timeline becomes available.

Thank you to the Groton Electric Light Department for their assistance with repairing and replacing streetlights in Dunstable.

Have a streetlight out on your street? Let us know at select-board@dunstable-ma.gov!

Town Adopts Updated Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

The Dunstable Select Board has formally adopted an updated Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), a document that outlines how the Town prepares for, responds to, and recovers from emergencies and disasters. The plan provides a framework for Town departments, public safety personnel, partner agencies, and volunteers to work together during emergency situations.

The updated plan establishes procedures for managing emergencies, including severe weather events, flooding, winter storms, wildfires, hazardous materials incidents, public health emergencies, cyber threats, and other natural or human-caused disasters. It identifies roles and responsibilities for Town officials and departments, outlines emergency communication and public notification procedures, and details how the Town will coordinate resources and request assistance from regional, state, and federal partners when necessary.

The plan is based on nationally recognized emergency management standards, including the National Incident Management System and Incident Command System, and includes sections for emergency operations, sheltering, evacuations, public information, recovery efforts, and ongoing training and exercises. It also incorporates planning considerations for vulnerable populations and continuity of government operations.

The development of the CEMP was a collaborative effort involving the Select Board, Town Administration, Emergency Management, Fire Department, Police Department, Highway Department, Board of Health, Human Services, and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District. The plan is reviewed and updated regularly as lessons are learned, conditions change, and best practices evolve in emergency management.

The Town extends its appreciation to Fire Chief Will Farrell for leading this important initiative. Chief Farrell coordinated the planning effort and guided the updated plan through adoption.

Central Cemetery Fence Restoration Project Advances

The Town of Dunstable Cemetery Commission is moving forward with the restoration of the historic fence surrounding Central Cemetery.

The project will include repairs to deteriorated sections of the approximately 750-foot wooden fence, replacement of damaged components, surface preparation, and repainting. The work is designed to preserve the fence's historic appearance while extending its useful life and improving its overall condition.

Funding for the project was approved by voters at Town Meeting through a $60,000 appropriation from the Community Preservation Act Fund. Following a competitive procurement process, the Town received four bids for the project. The apparent low bid was submitted by F & F Pro Painting Corp. in the amount of $37,900.

Once the contract is awarded and executed, work is expected to begin this fall and be completed by the end of November. The restoration will help ensure that Central Cemetery remains a well-maintained and attractive community resource while preserving an important part of Dunstable's history and character for future generations.



Annual Right to Farm Notification

Agriculture has played an important role in Dunstable's history, character, and rural landscape for generations. The Town remains committed to protecting and encouraging farming and agricultural activities, recognizing their value to the community, local economy, and preservation of open space.

In accordance with the Town's Right to Farm Bylaw, residents are reminded that Dunstable is a community where farms and agricultural operations are an accepted and important land use. Farming activities may occur year-round and can include, but are not limited to, the cultivation of crops, raising of livestock, forestry operations, and related agricultural activities. As part of normal farming practices, residents may experience noise from farm equipment, odors associated with livestock or fertilizers, dust, the operation of machinery during early morning or evening hours, and slow-moving farm vehicles traveling on public roadways.

The Right to Farm Bylaw helps ensure that farmers can continue to operate and contribute to the community while following applicable laws and regulations. Residents are encouraged to recognize and support the role agriculture plays in preserving the rural character and agricultural heritage that make Dunstable unique.

The bylaw also requires that any person selling, purchasing, occupying, or leasing property in Dunstable be provided written notice that the property is located within a community that protects and supports agricultural activities. Sellers and lessors are responsible for providing this disclosure to prospective purchasers, tenants, and occupants and for filing the required acknowledgment form with the Town as specified in the bylaw.

Dunstable's farms remain an important part of the community, providing local products, maintaining open space, and preserving the Town's longstanding agricultural traditions.

Additional information regarding the Right to Farm Bylaw may be obtained from the Agricultural Commission by emailing agricultural@dunstable-ma.gov or by visiting the Town's website at www.dunstable-ma.gov.

FY28 Budget and Capital Process Underway

The Town has begun development of the FY28 operating budget and FY28-FY32 Capital Improvement Plan. Department heads have been asked to submit budget requests that identify the funding needed to maintain current services, as well as any additional investments that could improve municipal operations, staffing, equipment, or service delivery.

The budget process comes as the Town continues to face financial challenges driven by costs increasing faster than available revenues. Town officials are working with the Town of Groton and School District representatives to evaluate potential paths forward, including possible override scenarios for consideration by voters.

As part of the process, departments are also being asked to identify capital projects while balancing community priorities with the impact on taxpayers. The information gathered over the coming weeks will help shape budget recommendations and long-term financial planning for the Town.

Town of Dunstable
511 Main Street
Dunstable, MA 01827

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Town Hall decorated for Halloween!

Halloween season has returned to Dunstable Town Hall!

Town Hall is once again illuminated with festive Halloween-themed lighting and decorations, thanks to the generosity and creativity of the Sniezek family. The annual display has become a fun seasonal tradition that helps bring a little Halloween spirit to the community and brightens Town Center.

The Town extends its appreciation to the Sniezek family for donating their time and effort to create and install the display each year. Residents are encouraged to stop by and enjoy the decorations throughout the Halloween season.

We hope residents and families enjoy this year's display and have a safe and happy Halloween!



Swallow Union Shade Structure Project Completed

Students, teachers, and families at Swallow Union Elementary School have a new outdoor shade structure that is now complete and ready for use thanks to the Town's Community Preservation Act (CPA) program.

The new permanent shade structure creates a flexible outdoor learning and gathering space that can be used as an outdoor classroom, providing students and teachers with additional opportunities for hands-on learning, fresh air, and outdoor instruction while offering protection from sun exposure and heat. The structure will also serve as a valuable amenity for families and community members attending school and recreational activities. School officials identified the project as a way to enhance the functionality of underutilized outdoor space while supporting educational programming and student well-being.



