

Town of Kingston

Capital Improvements Program

2024-2029

Prepared by:

the Kingston Planning Board  
February 2024



## **Acknowledgements**

The Capital Improvements Committee (CIP) prepared this document on behalf of the Kingston Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.

### ***Members of the Kingston Planning Board:***

Lynne Merrill, Chairman  
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The Kingston Planning Board endorsed this Capital Improvements Program by unanimous vote at their Planning Board public hearing of February , 2024.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM KINGSTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Town officials in Kingston, like their counterparts in other communities in New Hampshire, expend a great deal of effort each year establishing a municipal budget. This budget must realistically balance the ever-increasing needs and costs of delivering services to their constituents while at the same time staying within the financial constraints mandated by available tax revenues. In an acknowledgment of the precariousness of the annual budgetary process, the General Court authorized the use of a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to aid town officials in scheduling the investment of Town resources.

New Hampshire RSA 674:5-7 provides legal guidance as to authorization, purpose, description and preparation of the CIP. Undertaking a CIP can only be done after authorization to do so is granted by the local legislative body. This was done by a vote of the residents of Kingston at the annual Town Meeting of 1985.

***674:5 Authorization** – In a municipality where the planning board has adopted a master plan, the local legislative body may authorize the planning board to prepare and amend a recommended program of municipal capital improvement projects projected over a period of at least 6 years. As an alternative, the legislative body may authorize the governing body of a municipality to appoint a capital improvement program committee, which shall include at least one member of the planning board and may include but not be limited to other members of the planning board, the budget committee, or the town or city governing body, to prepare and amend a recommended program of municipal capital improvement projects projected over a period of at least 6 years. The capital improvements program may encompass major projects being currently undertaken or future projects to be undertaken with federal, state, county and other public funds. The sole purpose and effect of the capital improvements program shall be to aid the mayor or selectmen and the budget committee in their consideration of the annual budget.*

Although this document must have the authorization of the local legislative body, its use, once completed, is entirely advisory. The document is structured to provide a multi-year (at least six) recommended program of major capital projects and expenditures.

### **II. KINGSTON CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The Kingston Capital Improvements Program is a budgetary document that schedules all anticipated major Town expenditures for a period of six years. For each expenditure scheduled, the document includes a fiscal analysis that aids in prioritizing that project. The program, when adopted and fully utilized, serves to ensure that the services and facilities necessary to meet the community's needs are provided in accordance with the financial capabilities of Kingston.

For the purpose of this document, the Kingston Planning Board determined that a capital improvement is to be defined as: a major, generally non-recurring, expense of \$10,000 or more which falls into one of the following categories:

- The purchase of land for public purposes
- The purchase, construction, or rehabilitation of a municipal building or facility;
- The construction of roads, drainage facilities, or similar projects;
- The preparation of studies or architectural/engineering plans relative to the above;
- The purchase of vehicles; and
- The purchase of equipment with a life expectancy of over five years

### **Advantages of a Capital Improvement Program**

The adoption and implementation of a CIP offers many advantages:

1. **Stabilizes year to year variations in capital outlays.** By examining projected operating expenditures and revenues over the six-year period, available funding can be evaluated and capital projects prioritized and scheduled to temper tax impacts.
2. **Substantiates the need for development impact fees.** The costs of providing municipal services and infrastructure to new developments which would otherwise not have required Town expenditures can be reasonably passed on to developers as development impact fees.
3. **Make pre-emptive acquisitions more feasible and defensible.** Anticipating and scheduling land purchases for municipal use, recreation, preservation, etc. will help ensure that opportunities are taken if they arise.
4. **Supports growth control and impact fee ordinances.** A current Master Plan and CIP are statutory prerequisites for these regulations.
5. **Facilitates implementation of the Master Plan.** Prioritizing and scheduling of proposed projects over time can eliminate duplication and a random approach to expenditures.
6. **Provides a total picture of Kingston's major needs.** Large expenditures will be viewed in the context of other projects, rather than isolated instances as the needs arise. In this way, activities of municipal departments can be coordinated and piecemeal expenditures discouraged.
7. **Establishes a rational and defensible project schedule.** Needs are evaluated and prioritized in light of anticipated revenues.
8. **Serves as a public information tool.** The CIP is prepared in a public forum and provides sound information on the Town's plans for major expenditures.

In a cooperative effort, the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee review the CIP and make desired revisions prior to adoption. After a public hearing is held, the Planning Board adopts the CIP as the guide for capital projects over a six-year period.

Once the program has been adopted, it is reviewed and updated annually by the Planning Board in conjunction with a committee made up of representatives of the Planning Board, Budget Committee, and the Board of Selectmen. This is especially important when the voters at Town Meeting do not fund all proposed capital projects. The CIP recommendations for the upcoming

year's budget are presented to the Selectmen and Budget Committee. Each annual update adds an additional year to the schedule so that a six-year program period is maintained.

The CIP provides Kingston with an opportunity to schedule future capital expenditures necessary to support the existing and forecast population. At the same time, the Capital Program Budget process is a means of providing input into the Budget Committee Hearings process and Town Meetings, effectively implementing the Master Plan. A Capital Improvement Program and Budget is utilized to realistically measure public expenditure needs to implement programs provided for in the Master Plan and relate them to the Town's growth, then provide for the scheduling for such improvement.

The Capital Budgeting process affords the ability to stabilize the tax rate by spacing programs and payments gradually over a period of time, avoiding peaks and valleys in the appropriations necessary, thus stabilizing the tax rate. It is becoming increasingly important, particularly as state and federal funding programs become less and less available to local communities, that alternate sources of funding are sought and utilized.

A CIP can assist Kingston's measurement of capital expenditures required by proposed developments (even though in conformance with the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations) against the Town's ability to provide means necessary to support such new developments. It is through this process that a Planning Board may require off-site improvements in support of development rather than placing burdens of public improvements on the general public. This is especially true when the only beneficiary will be the developer who is proposing the development and those ultimately living in such development.

It is this process that also makes the Town realize that Capital expenditures necessary for new development and expansions of old ones are creating a burden on the public funding process. New developments can be reasonably assessed for their fair share of capital facility needs.

For Kingston to provide services without unduly burdening its financial capability, the Town should use a managed growth process. State Statutes require that a community, before exercising growth management, adopt a Master Plan and a Capital Improvement Program. The CIP must not merely indicate a community's inability to provide for rapid growth, but also indicate how financial planning can meet needs arising from future community growth.

Once the Planning Board has adopted a Capital Improvement Program and outlined a capital budget for the Town to consider, efforts toward community growth management must be related to the CIP process. The Planning Board measures new and proposed development, determining its inappropriateness in a schedule of timing, or its appropriateness in keeping with the community's ability to provide services, as well as its relationship to growing physical development.

It is through these means that the Planning Board can measure the need for off-site improvements such as road and traffic safety, can assess the impact of a proposed development, and can provide for orderly development of the community and implementation of the community's Master Plan.

The CIP is a stand-alone planning document, the use of which is voluntary by the Town. However, it is important to note that it is complementary to the Town's Master Plan. The major facility upgrades programmed in the CIP for the fire department are discussed in the community facilities chapter of the Master Plan. Reasons for constructing this improvement are offered as

long-term planning goals for the Fire Department. The CIP serves as a mechanism to help bring about these community improvements in a financially responsible way.

While Kingston has demonstrated a commitment to wise land-use planning through the implementation of its Master Plans and resulting regulations, the Planning Board must continue its effort to manage its rate of growth. The CIP helps to do this in a structured manner.

### **Financial Capacity and Method of Financing**

Town expenditures can be grouped into two broad categories -- operating and capital. Operating expenses include such items as salaries, utilities, insurance, rent, equipment purchases under \$10,000, etc. Capital expenses are restricted to land, vehicles, buildings, equipment that lasts more than 5 years, building renovations and repairs, and road projects which result in long term improvements.

Capital improvements are generally funded in five ways that are explained below: 1) current revenue, 2) general obligation bonds, 3) revenue bonds, 4) capital reserve funds and 5) special revenue sources. A sixth revenue source, the Infrastructure Development Fund is particular to the Town of Kingston and is described below as well.

1. **Current Revenue:** The most commonly used method of financing capital projects is through the use of current revenues. Current revenue is the money raised by the local property tax for a given year. When a project is funded with current revenues, its entire cost is paid off within one year. Projects funded with current revenues are customarily lower in cost than those funded by bonds. If the town has the financial capacity to pay for a project in a given year, the cost to the taxpayer will be less than if bonded because there are no interest payments to be made. However, making capital acquisitions with current revenues does have the effect of scheduling an expenditure into one-year resulting in higher taxes for the year of purchase.
2. **General Obligation Bonds:** These bonds are used to finance major capital projects. They are issued for a period of time ranging from five years to twenty years, during which time principal and interest payments are made. They are secured by the government's power to tax and are paid for by property taxes. Time payments have the advantage of allowing the capital expenditures to be amortized over the life of the project and of avoiding the property tax peaks that result from capital purchases made from current revenues. On the other hand, they do commit resources over a long period of time, decreasing the flexibility of how yearly revenue can be utilized.
3. **Revenue Bonds:** These bonds are issued to finance revenue-producing facilities, such as water and sewer services. Revenue bonds differ from general obligation bonds in that, while the town secures them, they are paid for out of revenues generated by the improvement being financed. Thus, a water distribution system improvement, funded through revenue bonds, would be paid for by revenue received from water users. User fees, with no local tax money involved therefore pay for the floating of these bonds.

4. **Capital Reserve Fund:** Since many capital projects involve very considerable expenditures, it is often advantageous to set aside current revenue over a period of years in order to make a purchase. The resulting capital reserve fund can be for general purposes, with its use determined at a later date, or specific, with its purpose set out initially. One obvious advantage of a capital reserve fund is that the major acquisition can be made without the need to go into the bond market and without making interest payments. With capital reserve funds, monies are "removed" from the town's budget in the year in which the money is appropriated, not in the year in which the purchase is actually made.
5. **Special Revenue Sources:** This category includes projects financed by user fees, intergovernmental transfers, grants and gift/donations. Intergovernmental transfers, so-called, are highway aid from the NH Dept. of Public Works and Highways, the Environmental Protection Agency for sewer projects, the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development for community development projects, and the Dept. of the Treasury for general revenue sharing funds. These programs either provide an out-right grant or provide matching funds to go with locally raised funds.
6. **Infrastructure Development, Improvement and Maintenance Fund:** On March 13, 2007, the Town of Kingston voted to rescind the provisions of RSA 31:95c that had been previously adopted to restrict 100% of the revenues generated from the operation of the Kingston Landfill ("*Landfill Account*") for expenditures for the operation and future closing of the Kingston Landfill due to its closure in 2004. The Town also voted to restrict \$1,400,000 (One million, four hundred thousand dollars) from that fund to a Capital Reserve Fund, under the provisions of RSA 35:1, for the purpose of satisfying the municipality's obligation to monitor and maintain the closure of the Kingston Landfill as required by the State of New Hampshire. (The balance in this CRF as of end of October 2023 is \$2,017,437).

The third action taken on that same date was to establish a general trust fund, under RSA 31:19-a II, to be known as the "*Town of Kingston Infrastructure Development, Improvement and Maintenance Fund*" for the purpose of building, expanding, improving and maintaining Town-owned structures and improvements; the intent of this vote was to establish a Revocable Trust. At that time, \$6,000,000 (Six million dollars) was placed into that account from the remainder of the funds in the Landfill Account. The Town authorized the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend those funds for the purposes listed, but only those monies earned through investment, including interest and dividends; the original investment of \$6,000,000 was not able to be expended without additional vote of the Town. The townspeople have voted one time to utilize monies from this fund to be used for building the new Community Library in March 2011. The Infrastructure Fund currently (end of October 2023) has \$3,531,308.

During the Capital Improvement Plan process, the possibility of utilizing a portion of the original investment of \$6,000,000 for the capital building projects has been discussed as a funding option for several projects. Any utilization of the original investment requires Town meeting action.

There has also been discussion of utilizing the earned investment (either yearly or by saving up the investment earned for multiple years) to help fund the proposed building projects in the Capital Improvement Plan; this option would require Board of Selectmen approval to expend those funds for that purpose. A third option was the possibility of using the yearly earned investment funds to eliminate the tax impact of a bond for the building projects; this proposal would also require Town meeting action.

### III. **Proposed Capital Projects**

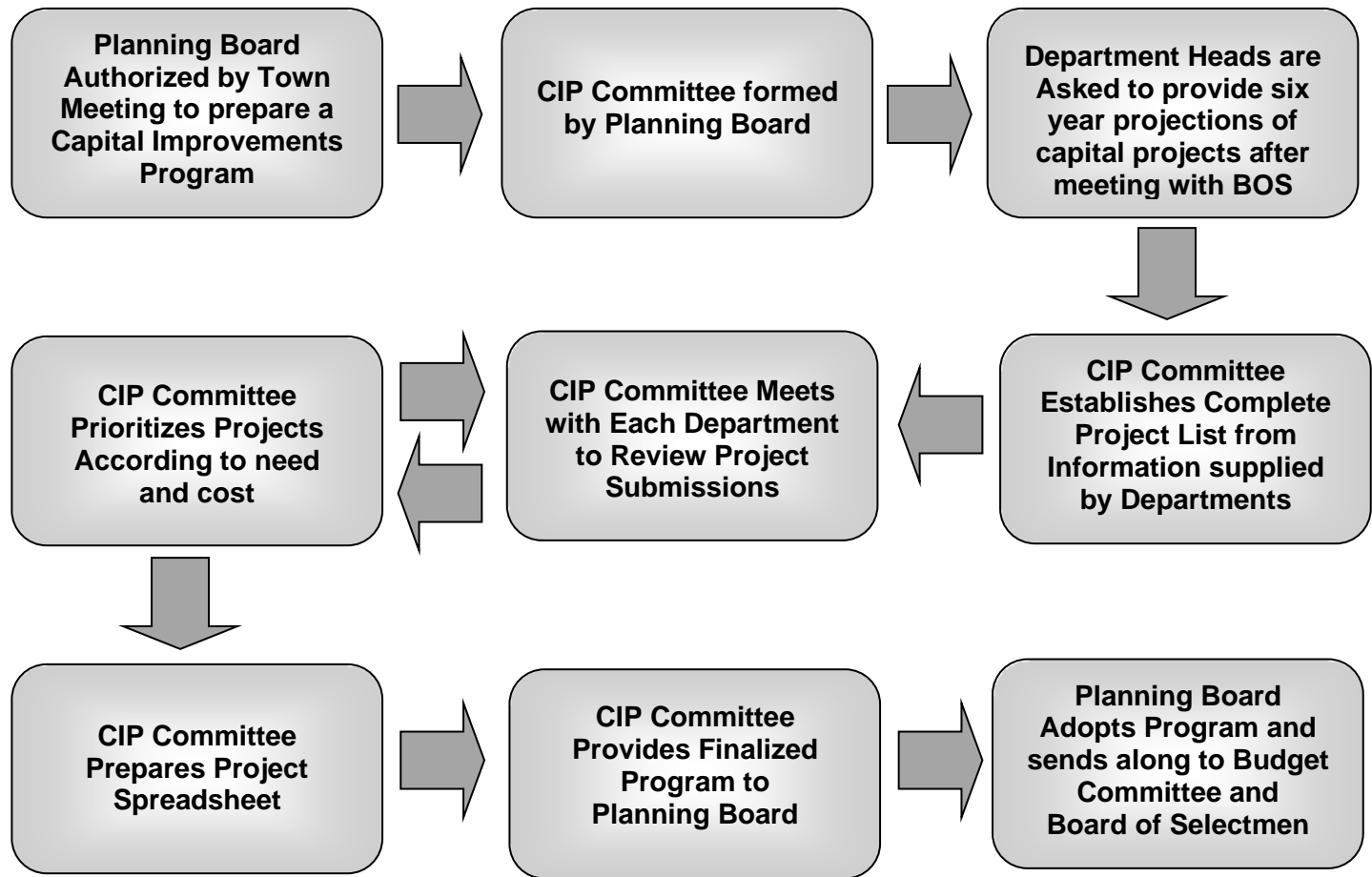
The primary goal of the Capital Improvements Program is to schedule the expenditures so that the peaks and valleys in the Town's annual tax rate are eliminated. The largest expenditures are anticipated and scheduled, and smaller expenditures are worked in around them to create a steady or gradually increasing tax rate.

A goal or target expenditure level is set for each of the years in the project period. For a community that is growing slowly without substantial increases in its tax base from year to year, the sum of the cost of all the projects can be divided by the number of years in the plan to yield a flat expenditure rate. In this case, dividing the expenditures equally over the period would result in a higher tax burden in the earlier years of the plan and a lower burden in later years, as the taxable property increases.

In Kingston's case, the department heads prioritized the projects; a project indicated as essential was scheduled first. Table 1, titled **Kingston Capital Improvement Plan 2024 - 2029** shows anticipated capital projects for the next six years. The projects have been scheduled as submitted by the assorted departments with minimal adjustments made by the CIP committee in an effort to equalize capital expenditures over the six-year plan period.

Copies of the project request forms submitted by department heads that were used in the preparation of this document are on file in the Planning Board office. In order to better understand the projects, a brief description of each is presented below. Unless otherwise indicated, the projects were submitted as being funded with current revenues as described in the financing section above.

## Kingston CIP Process



**This diagram illustrates the CIP process undertaken by the Planning Board.** The final document is an advisory tool to help the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee determine how to allocate Town resources to efficiently and effectively fund the capital requests of the various municipal departments. Aside from authorizing the creation of the CIP and establishing the CIP Committee (steps one and two above) annual updates of the CIP will include each of these.

**Table 1 - Kingston Capital Improvements Program 2024-2029**

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Impact Fees	Grants /Reimbursements	CRF
<b>Board of Selectmen</b>									
Perambulate Town Boundaries		\$20,000							
<b>Building and Grounds:</b>									
Replace Dodge Van with Pick-up			\$45,000						
Develop a municipal-wide recycling facility to allow the Town to discontinue the need for an external contract for recycling.	\$94,958	\$94,958	\$94,958					\$38,000	\$200,000
Repave the existing paved surfaces at the Police Department, the Town Hall, The Nichols Museum, the South Fire Staton and the Public Works facility.		\$116,500							
Assess and repair the storage building located at the Recreation Center.	\$7,900								
Rehabilitate the main meeting room of the Town Hall.		\$50,500							
Complete engineering study for and conctruct new entry stairway to the Town Hall	\$54,500								
Replace existing oil HVAC system in the Town Hall with a new LP system with heat pumps.	\$124,000								
Install new lighting at the Plains.	\$20,000								
<b>Fire Department:</b>									
Forestry 1 Replacement				\$250,000					\$100,000
Tank 1 Replacement			\$700,000						\$164,657
Bond payments for Central Fire Station	\$214,140	\$207,255	\$200,370	\$193,485	\$186,600	\$179,715			

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Impact Fees	Grants /Reim- bursements	CRF
Utility 1						\$50,000			
<b>Highway Department:</b>									
Re-side the Public Works maintenance Barn and construct a new roof.	\$54,500								
Constuct a new water-proof hoop structure for the structurally failing exisiting salt shed.	\$62,500								
Develop an engineered plan for the reconstruction of the road network at Great Pond Park.			\$318,500						
Creaton of a water utility in Town. Including engineering and the establishment of a task force to over see the utility development.	\$114,800					\$1,895,000			
Re-stripe Main Street to facilitate one way traffic north and south of the Plains.		\$XXXXXX							
Vehicle Replacement	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000			
Replace Bridge on Main Street						\$850,000		\$600,000	
<b>Kingston Community Library:</b>									
Engineer and constuct an outdoor education center at the community library. The project will have a sound barrier wall, covered pavillion, performance stageplay area, ADA accessible trails and a water feature.					\$1,620,000		\$42,000	\$785,000	
<b>Nichols Historical Museum:</b>									
Replace storm and regular windows			\$40,000						
<b>Recreation Department:</b>									

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Impact Fees	Grants /Reim- bursements	CRF
Undertake upgrade and improvement to the "Craft Shack" at the recreation field	\$11,000								
Create a new 50 feet by 100 feet paved play surface at the Recreation Center for pickle ball and ice skating	\$25,000								
<b>Open-Space Preservation:</b>									\$501,283
Acquire Open Space/Cons. Easements	\$67,200	\$67,200	\$67,200	\$67,200	\$67,200	\$67,200			
Total expenditures:	<b>\$950,498</b>	<b>\$656,413</b>	<b>\$1,566,028</b>	<b>\$610,685</b>	<b>\$1,973,800</b>	<b>\$3,141,915</b>			
Minus Grants/CRF/ etc.	\$0	\$0	\$202,657	\$100,000	\$827,000	\$600,000			
Minus Capital Projects Funds	\$11,000	\$0	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Total Anticipated Revenue:	<b>\$11,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$402,657</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$827,000</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>			
Total needed to be raised by taxes	\$939,498	\$656,413	\$1,163,371	\$510,685	\$1,146,800	\$2,541,915			

## VI. Project Narratives

Requests for capital projects were solicited from each of Kingston's departments in an effort to determine the level of capital expenditure for the next six years. Each department was asked to provide a narrative description of the capital improvement, an estimated cost and an internal department ranking or priority statement if more than one project was submitted. This information is summarized below to act as supporting documentation of the projects listed on the Capital Improvements Program.

### **Board of Selectmen**

The Board of Selectmen has just one project on the CIP. This is accomplishing a new town boundary perambulation as required by State law. It is expected that engineering support and GIS mapping will be necessary to accomplish this project.

### **Town Buildings and Grounds and Highway Department**

The Highway Department has estimated that over the next six years they will replace a number of vehicles and the CIP proposes a vehicle replacement line as is done with the Fire Department. The annual funding level has varied for the past several years but beginning in the 2021 CIP this figure has been raised to \$100,000. In addition, the following Highway Department project is on the current CIP:

#### **The CIP proposes funding for the following bridge repair projects:**

1. Replace bridge on Main Street for \$850,000 in 2025 with \$600,000 available in grant funds.

### **Town Buildings**

#### **The CIP programs the following general Town Buildings & Maintenance projects:**

1. Replace Dodge van with pick-up \$45,000 in 2026.
2. Develop a municipal-wide recycling facility to allow the Town to no longer contract for recycling.
3. Repave the existing parking areas at the Police Department, town Hall, Nichols Museum, South Fire Station and the Public Works facility.
4. Assess and repair the storage building located at the Recreation Center.
5. Rehabilitate the Main Room of the Town Hall.
6. Undertake an engineering assessment and construct new entry steps for the front entrance to the Town Hall.
7. Replace the existing Town Hall HVAC system with a new liquid petroleum system with heat pumps.
8. Install new lighting at the Plains.



**Illustration 1 Main Room  
Town Hall**

## **Highway Department**

The Highway Department has six projects scheduled on the current CIP and they include three with far reaching ramifications for the community.

1. Re-side the Public Works maintenance barn and construct a new roof for the building.
2. Construct a new water-proof hoop structure for the structurally failing existing salt shed.
3. Develop an engineered plan for the reconstruction of the road network at Great Pond Park.
4. Create a water utility in Town. This would include engineering and the establishment of a task force to oversee the public water utility.
5. Re-stripe Main Street to facilitate one way traffic north and south of the Plains.
6. Annual vehicle replacement funds.



**Illustration 2 Salt Shed**

## **Fire Department**

The Kingston Fire Department has submitted four projects to the CIP. The Department has a vehicle replacement program to ensure that emergency vehicles are replaced in a timely manner with appropriate vehicles. Currently there are three vehicles scheduled for replacement at a total cost of \$800,000. In 2027 Forestry 1 vehicle is planned for replacement at a cost of \$250,000 and in 2026 Tank 1 is proposed for replacement at a cost of \$700,000. As of November 2023 there is approximately \$438,000 available in capital reserve accounts for Fire Department capital projects. The third vehicle is Utility 1 and is scheduled for 2029 at a cost of \$50,000.

The fourth project listed on the CIP is the bond payments for the new central fire station. These payments include both principal and interest for the 20-year bond.



**Illustration 3 Kingston Fire Department**

### **Kingston Community Library**

The Kingston Community Library has one project on the current CIP. This project involves the engineering and construction of an outdoor education center. The project will incorporate a sound barrier wall, covered pavilion, performance stage/play area, a water feature and ADA compliant trails.

### **Nichols Historical Museum**

The Nichols Historical Museum has only one project remaining on the CIP after completing a number of improvements to the facility.

1. Replace storm and regular windows at the Nichols building. This project will cost \$40,000 and is expected to be accomplished in 2026.



**Illustration 4 Nichols Historical Museum**

### **Police Department**

The Police Department has no projects on the current CIP.

### **Recreation Department**

The Kingston Recreation Commission submitted two projects for the CIP cycle. The first project is the creation of a new 50 feet by 50 feet paved play surface at the recreation Center. This area will accommodate both Ice Skating in the winter and pickleball in other seasons. The second project is the improvement of the “Craft Shack” at the Recreation Center.

### **Open Space Preservation**



The Town of Kingston Master Plan has set a goal to conserve 25% to 30% of the total acreage in town as open space. Resources for conserving open space include such things as grants, donations of land, preservation under innovative zoning ordinance and funding appropriated by the town. The anticipated total cost for completing this undertaking is approximately \$3.3 million dollars. After factoring in potential grants, land donations and innovative zoning and

**Illustration 5 Natural resource protection**

funds currently in the Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund the additional funding needed to be appropriated for this project is approximately \$672,000. Because of the complexity of issues surrounding conservation of open space it is difficult to project exactly when the goal will be met. For purposes of CIP planning, it is estimated that this undertaking will be completed in the next ten years. Due to the inability to forecast when a property will be available for protection the program includes the capital reserve funds broken out over the same ten-year period as an offset of \$67,200.