TOWN OF

BELLINGHAM

MASSACHUSETTS

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN

2025



Prepared By:

The Bellingham Open Space Committee

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SECTION 1 – PLAN SUMMARY

The Town of Bellingham's 2025 Open Space and Recreation Plan is the direct culmination of the town's efforts to connect with town residents, boards, commissions, and staff to guide the town efforts towards preserving open space, providing outreach, and maintaining and enhancing recreation in Bellingham. Over 500 responses were received in response to the 2023/2024 survey, over double the response to the last OSRP citizen survey from 2016. This survey, along with feedback from a public and local forum provided the backbone of this document. In response to this feedback and input from Bellingham boards, committees and staff, five pillars were devised

- **Identify and Define**: Uncover the potential of each open space parcel and clearly define its use for the public.
- **Repair**: Increase safety and inclusivity by fixing existing features
- **Maintain**: Build a sustainable foundation for the systems already in place.
- **Enhance**: Implement projects to meet future public needs.
- **Share**: Utilize multiple outreach methods to keep the community informed.

The goals, objectives and action detailed in Section 9 of this plan are proposed within the framework of a 7-year timeline in accordance with the format prescribed by the State Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

SECTION 2 – INTRODUCTION

2.A Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to safeguard Bellingham's open spaces and recreational resources amidst ongoing development pressures and urban sprawl. The goal is to enhance the existing open space areas to protect natural ecosystems while offering enriching experiences and recreational options for the community. Prior open space plans were finalized in 1986, 1995, 2002, 2009, and 2017, with the 1995 and 2002 plans covering Bellingham, Franklin, and Blackstone. Updating the OSRP ensures Bellingham remains eligible for grants from the Division of Conservation Services of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs that could assist Bellingham with acquisitions, maintenance, and new recreational developments on open space properties. These grants have previously assisted the Town in acquiring Silver Lake and around 30 acres along the Charles River, as well as developing the Blackstone Street Fields.

2.B Planning Process & Public Participation

Members of the Bellingham Open Space Committee did background research and wrote the 2025 OSRP. A part of that work included collecting input from town officials and the general public. Both town officials and residents have valuable insights into the town's requirements, challenges, and potential opportunities that must be addressed. Their feedback is essential for setting goals, defining objectives, and ensuring that proposed recommendations are practical and garner enough support for successful implementation.

Public Survey: The public survey asked 11 questions that required multiple choice, short answer, and extended response answers. Electronic and paper copies were made available at the Fall Town Meeting, the Town Hall, Library, Senior Center, email groups, social media, and the town website. The survey was available for 2 1/2 months. 509 individuals responded. The survey and an analysis of the results can be viewed in the Community Goals section.

Open Space and Recreation Committee: Bellingham’s first Open Space & Recreation Committee began meeting in December 2023 as an ad-hoc committee authorized by the conservation commission and arranged by the conservation administrator to create the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The committee, comprised of town board members, residents and town staff identified progress made on the 2016 OSRP, created and analyzed the public survey, and used that feedback to formulated the new OSRP. At the time of publishing the 2025 OSRP, the committee is now a 7 member committee approved by the Selectboard that meets on an at least biannual basis. The committee has been charged by the Select Board with monitoring and updating the OSRP and contributing towards achieving the goals outlined in the OSRP.

Public Forum: On September 18th, 2024, the Open Space and Recreation Committee hosted a Public Forum in the Town Hall from 6:30-8:30 pm. This meeting was held with the intent to give

the locals an opportunity to make comments on the Proposed Open Space and Recreation 2024 Action Plan. There was also an online forum option open for 5 weeks for people to comment on.

Interdepartmental Input: During the month of November, 2024 a draft of the Open Space and Recreation Action Plan was sent out to all town departments for comment. In October 2025 a second draft of the updated Action Plan was sent to applicable town departments for comment. Their input was received and implemented into the plan as a final effort to encapsulate the town's collected effort to create and achieve Open Space and Recreation Goals.

Open Space Committee at the time of Publishing:

- Arianne Barton (*Conservation Commission Vice Chair*)
- Doug Martin (*Parks Committee*)
- Jen Altomonte (*Selectboard*)
- Chad Kelley
- Nicole Rutkowski
- Danielle Dulchinos (*Cultural Council*)

Thank you to town staff and previous committee members:

Hannah Crawford, Previous Conservation Administrator
Kaya Sahin & Claudia Decker, Previous Conservation Department Interns
David Ahnert, GIS Coordinator Department of Public Works (DPW)
Hannah Chace, Conservation Agent
Sahan Sahin, Previous Selectboard Member
Denis Fraine, Previous Town Administrator
Joeseph Laydon, Town Administrator
Sean Harrington, Assistant DPW Director

Special *thank you* to the community members of Bellingham for your knowledge, input and feedback!

SECTION 3 – COMMUNITY SETTING

3.A Regional Context

The Town of Bellingham is a narrow strip of land (8 miles long by 2 miles wide) situated in a triangle formed by Boston (northeast), Providence (south), and Worcester (west). It spans from the historic Blackstone Valley on the west to the I-495 corridor on the north and east. Locally, its southern border meets Woonsocket, RI, and its northern border is Milford. Nearby urban centers provide medical, professional, and retail services, while neighboring towns like Mendon and Wrentham add to the area's rural charm.

Bellingham's central location offers easy access to recreational and cultural facilities within an hour in any direction, including the Berkshires and Cape Cod. This accessibility has spurred residential, commercial, and industrial growth, reducing undeveloped space, altering the area's character, and straining recreational capacities.

The town straddles two key watersheds – the Blackstone River and Charles River – both vital to regional ecosystems, requiring environmental responsibility to minimize negative impacts.

Bellingham is part of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT), which connects Franklin, Bellingham, Blackstone, and the Douglas State Forest, and links to the Blackstone River Greenway, a multi-use trail between Providence and Worcester.

Bellingham belongs to the MAPC's Southwest Area Planning (SWAP) sub-region (Bellingham, Dover, Franklin, Hopkinton, Medway, Milford, Millis, Norfolk, Sherborn, and Wrentham) and the MetroFuture project, which aims to preserve land, encourage sustainable growth, enhance regional identity, and fulfill recreational needs. Recently, discussions have focused on expanding multi-use pathways by repurposing old railroad beds and securing easements.

In 2012, Bellingham participated in the 495 MetroWest Development Compact, identifying the SNETT as a priority preservation area along with Beaver Pond, Jenks Reservoir, and Bungay Brook. Priority development areas include Pearl Street Mill and Pulaski Boulevard/Route 126.

Town of Bellingham
Open Space and Recreation Plan
10/20/2025

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MAP No. 1

Regional Context Map

Legend

- Interstate Route
- Bellingham
- Towns in the SWAP
- Charles River Watershed
- Blackstone River Watershed
- Blackstone River Greenway
- Upper Charles Trail
- SNETT Trail



Bellingham, MA

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WESTBOROUGH
ASHLAND
NATICK
NEEDHAM
SHERBORN
DOVER
HOPKINTON
WESTWOOD
GRAFTON
UPTON
MEDFIELD
MILLIS
MILFORD
MEDWAY
WALPOLE
NORTHBRIDGE
HOPEDALE
NORFOLK
MENDON
BELLINGHAM
FRANKLIN
FOXBOROUGH
UXBRIDGE
WRENTHAM
DOUGLAS
MILLVILLE
BLACKSTONE
PLAINVILLE
NORTH SMITHFIELD
WOONSOCKET
CUMBERLAND

495 90 128 95 146 140

3.B Community History

Bellingham is the native land of the Pokanoket, Wampanoag, and Nipmuc tribes. Much of their rich cultures has been lost since colonization, and some information may not be entirely accurate.

3.B.1 Woodlands & Earlier Periods

The Pokanoket (Pauquunaukit) nation, meaning "land of the clearing" in Natick, thrived in the New England region for over 12,000 years. The Pokanoket were leaders of multiple tribal groups that now form the modern-day Wampanoag, with an estimated 2,400 Wampanoag natives living in Massachusetts and roughly 50,000-100,000 total between Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The Nipmuc tribe, or "freshwater people," occupied a central territory that included modern-day central Massachusetts south of the Merrimac Valley, including northeast Connecticut and northwest Rhode Island. By 1620, there were roughly 5,000-6,000 Nipmuc in this area.

3.B.2 Colonization

At the time of colonist arrival in Plymouth, Massachusetts, the Pokanoket, led by Massasoit Ousamequin, served as the leadership tribe of over 60 clans and other tribes that pledged their allegiance. They welcomed the English settlers and aided them in acclimating to the land. In 1621, they entered a defense agreement in exchange for mutual help and protection. However, as colonist settlements grew and indigenous numbers dwindled following The Great Dying, tensions emerged.

King Philip’s War (1675-1676) was one of the deadliest conflicts in American history, fought between Native American tribes of southern New England and English settlers. The war stemmed from escalating tensions over land encroachment and resulted in widespread devastation, with over half of New England's towns attacked. Both sides suffered heavy casualties, with estimates of 5,000 Native Americans and 1,000 English settlers killed. The conflict devastated indigenous populations, crops, and communities.

Bellingham, situated between tribal territories, served as a buffer during the war, keeping European newcomers away. The peak of chaos occurred in 1675 when every house in nearby Mendon was burned, causing residents to flee through Bellingham toward Boston. Despite many Nipmuc assisting the English as spies, most were sent to the Boston Harbor Islands as prisoners of war.

After the war, European settlers began living in Bellingham. In the late 1600s, Medfield joined Mendon "for the settling of the Common Rode way from town to town," which became part of the central road through Hartford from Boston to New York along what is now Hartford Avenue in Bellingham. The first European landowners settled around Beaver Pond in what was then Mendon. In 1685, Edward Rawson, the Puritan Secretary of the Colony, purchased over 600 acres, confirmed by the Colonial Legislature, which became known as Rawson's Farm in the

areas of Caryville and North Bellingham, making up about a third of the present-day land of Bellingham.

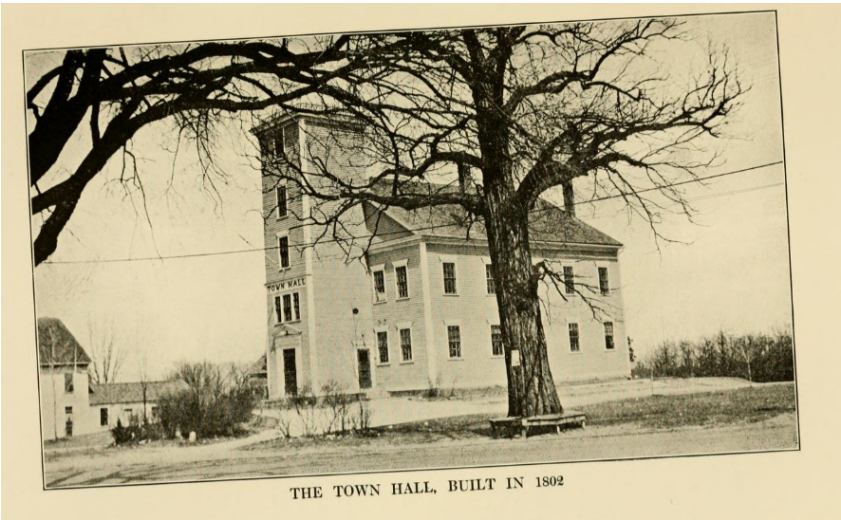
3.B.3 Incorporation

In 1691, the Dedham selectmen sent two men to explore the land of present-day Bellingham, and in 1698, the “proprietors of the common or undivided lands of Dedham” discovered they contained about 2,100 acres. They agreed to draw lots of about 100 acres each. Jacob Bartlett and Nicholas Cook were the first two men granted tracts in Bellingham, with nine more families settling within the next ten years, followed by another forty men soon thereafter.

Bellingham was part of Dedham until its incorporation in 1719, becoming the last town incorporated in what is now Norfolk County. The new town was formed from three portions: Rawson's Farm, a small part of Mendon, and the remaining two-thirds from Dedham, named after Sir Richard Bellingham, the third governor of Massachusetts Bay. At incorporation, Bellingham had approximately forty families, characterized by religious diversity. Although a Congregational Church was necessary to petition the General Court, the presence of Baptists and Quakers in the area led to ongoing conflicts as the town grew.

In March 1720, the original families held their first town meeting, where they established the first meeting house on what is now Blackstone Street. This meeting house stood until 1774 and served as a boundary point for constables. In 1737, a free school was approved. The Open Town Meeting and Selectmen guided Bellingham's steady growth.

By 1765, Bellingham's population reached 462 individuals comprising 82 families and 72 houses. The town had an agrarian economy, but the land was generally poor for agriculture, leading most residents to engage in cattle and sheep farming. As Bellingham expanded, it evolved from a north-south alignment to include a central area. In 1802, a formal town hall was built, which stands today. By this time, Bellingham's population had reached 706.



THE TOWN HALL, BUILT IN 1802

Town Hall, From the History of Bellingham

3.B.4 Industrial Revolution

The 1820s marked the expansion of development and government in Bellingham, whose population had risen to 1,034 by that time. Initially a farming town, by 1828, it had transformed into “an active and flourishing manufacturing town.” Three cotton mills and one wool mill were established along the Charles River in North Bellingham. By 1830, boot and shoe production had also contributed to the local economy, with a horse-drawn wagon making regular trips from Milford to Boston selling these goods. Wooden commercial structures began to appear along Hartford Avenue and the Town Center, with cottages sprouting up near the mills.

North Bellingham saw growth with the arrival of the New York and New England Railroad in 1863, connecting the town from Medway to Mendon. This rail line facilitated the movement of materials and goods for the mills, which were vital during the Civil War, employing more people than any other industry in town in 1864. However, post-war, the industry rapidly declined.

The late 1800s saw an influx of foreign-born populations, primarily Irish and French Canadians. St. Brandan’s Roman Catholic Church was built in 1895, drawing a large Irish Catholic population to Bellingham, while many French and Polish families settled in South Bellingham near Woonsocket. Settlement concentrations emerged along North Bellingham's main streets, with South Bellingham developing as a suburb of Woonsocket by 1900.

The turn of the century brought improvements, including a state highway from Crooks Corner and new schoolhouses in both northern and southern Bellingham. By 1897, pedestrian trolley service was introduced, and the Milford, Holliston and Framingham Street Railway Company established lines through Bellingham. In 1899, the Railway Company expanded its ownership by purchasing Silver Lake and surrounding land, constructing a summer theater and a carousel in 1900.



Silver Lake (then identified as Hoag Lake) iconic carousel
From: University of Massachusetts Boston, Joseph P. Healey Library

Technological advancements and infrastructure improvements fueled steady population growth, from 40 founding families to 1,953 residents by 1915. The town began shifting from traditional farmland to suburban development, especially in the north and center along major transportation corridors, while the southern area experienced commercial growth towards Woonsocket, leading to the construction of three-deckers and multifamily housing.

3.B.5 20th Century to Present

The automobile significantly influenced Bellingham's growth throughout the 20th century. While the North Bellingham mill operated until the mid-20th century, and the Caryville mill remained in operation until the 1990s, jobs gradually migrated to larger hubs like Boston, Providence, and Worcester, all within thirty miles. Trolley ridership declined, leading to the cessation of services in 1924.

From 1940 to 1970, Bellingham experienced postwar economic development similar to other Massachusetts towns. Its population soared from 5,421 in 1955 to nearly 14,000 in 1970, solidifying its status as a bedroom community. Subdivisions such as Pilgrim Village, Scott Hill Acres, and Green Acres emerged in the 1960s, featuring modest single-family homes on small lots, while only one active farm remained.

By 1970, easy access to Bellingham resulting from the completion of Interstate 495 brought significant commercial development, as well as additional suburban residential development. Several large parcels of land in North Bellingham, near the I-495 interchange, were developed with national chain retail stores and large retail strip centers. No longer a farming community, most remaining large undeveloped lots were utilized for gravel removal operations over the next thirty years. This played a significant role in reshaping Bellingham’s topography, as the town, from its first discovery, was known for its poor farming soils but contained excellent sandy material.

Historically a community of modest means, Bellingham continued to seek and promote a low cost of living. To maintain this, the Board of Selectmen recognized the newly found amenities such as Interstate 495 and proximity to Interstate 95, establishing an Industrial Development Commission to market the town to industry to retain a lower tax rate for its residents. In 1980, 1.8 percent of the land was used for industrial purposes and 8.5 percent for commercial purposes. By 1990, those numbers increased to 5.32 percent and 11.89 percent, respectively, bringing many small manufacturing jobs, while adding less than 900 new homes. The Town of Bellingham was maintaining a $10 million annual budget in 1990.

Today, Bellingham is a community of nearly 17,000 residents and has a $55 million annual budget. The town has a mix of industry, major distribution centers, and nearly 1,000,000 square feet of retail located off of Interstate 495. Bellingham hosts approximately 6,214 jobs, but much like the early 20th century, has witnessed a significant reduction in manufacturing jobs. Bellingham maintains a very modest residential tax rate relative to the region, stemming from approximately

28 percent of town revenues generated from the commercial base, which is higher than any of its neighboring towns, and housing costs that still remain below those closer to Boston.

3.C Population Characteristics

Table 1. Bellingham Population Trends

Year	Population	Percent Change
1990	14,877	
1995	15,434	3.7
2000	15,314	-0.7
2005	15,784	3.1
2010	16,332	3.5
2015	16,682	2.1
2020	16,945	1.6
Projected 2025	Projected 17,695	Projected 4.4

Table 2. Bellingham Density Trends

Year	Density (persons per square mile)
1990	802
1995	832
2000	825
2005	851
2010	880
2015	899
2020	913
Projected 2025	Projected 2025: 965

Table 3. Bellingham Age breakdown

Between 2000 and 2010 the population has aged and household size has shrunk, as is the case in many communities in the region. The percentage of residents between 55 to 64 years old increased by 49 percent which required the town to invest in a new senior center. At the same time, school enrollment in town decreased by nearly 12 percent between 2003 and 2014. In response, the town demolished one of the three elementary schools and consolidated districts

once again in 2015. Between 2015 and 2025, enrollment continued to decrease with an approximately 15% decrease in student enrollment since 2015.

Race and Ethnicity

The 2020 U.S. Census Decennial Census data indicated that 14,471 of the 16,945 residents identify as white (85.4%). The 2020 survey also indicated 4.4% or residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, 4.2% of residents identified as mixed race, 3% identify as Asian, 1.8% as Black, 1% identify as another race, and 0.1% identify as American Indian, Alaska native, native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Income

Bellingham's median household income in 2023 (latest US Census American Community Survey) was $120,966. This is well above the US median family income of $80,610 and Massachusetts median household income of $99,858

The number of families below the poverty level in 2023 was 4.4%. This is significantly lower than Massachusetts (10.4%) and the US as a whole (12.5%). In Bellingham 5.4% of children under 18 years of age fall below the poverty line, in addition to 3.9% of adults between 18 and 64 at and 5.2% of seniors 65 and over.

Employment

According to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, the labor force in Bellingham has grown from an annual average of 9,158 in 2017 to and annual average of 10,218 in 2024. In 2025, the average of the first 8 months of the year the Labor force grew to an average of 10,404.

Environmental Justice Communities

As seen in Map 2, Bellingham has two areas that identify as environmental justice communities. Along the east side of North Main Street, the south side of 495, and the west side of Maple Street is a known income environmental justice block group according to the 2020 census. For an area to be considered an income environmental justice block group, the annual median household income is not more than 65% of the statewide annual median household income.

The other block group is located east of South Main Street, south of Cross Street, and North of the SNETT trail. This block group is labeled as 'minority', meaning that minorities comprise 40 percent or more of the population.

MAP 2 - In FINAL DRAFT - insert "Environmental Justice Map" full scale tabloid in PDF editor

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

3/17/2025

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MAP No. 2

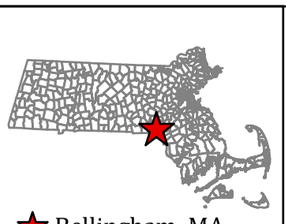
Environmental Justice Map

Legend

- Interstate
- State Route
- Minor Rds Town
- Minor Roads
- Rivers and Perennial Streams DEP

EJ Criteria

- Income
- Minority



★ Bellingham, MA

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3.D Growth & Development Patterns

Bellingham was historically an agrarian community, with waterpower and later railroad access spurring early industrial development, particularly mills. Over time, transportation infrastructure, particularly I-495, has become a key driver of commercial and industrial growth, especially at its interchange with Route 126, which serves as the town's commercial and industrial hub. The highway also facilitates access to jobs, goods, services, and recreation for residents, making Bellingham an increasingly desirable place to live. However, this growth has led to more local traffic, resulting in congestion and a rise in accidents.

Other major roadways, such as Routes 140 and 126, serve as crucial links to surrounding communities. Route 140 provides a corridor to Milford in the north and Franklin to the east, while Route 126 connects Woonsocket in the south to Medway, Holliston, Ashland, and Framingham to the north. Pulaski Boulevard in southern Bellingham remains a central commercial area, and the town center has developed at the intersection of Routes 140 and 126.

Railroads further support transportation in Bellingham, with nearby commuter rail stations in Franklin offering convenient access to Boston and attracting new residents. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has considered expanding rail service to Bellingham and Milford, although no concrete plans currently exist. Freight rail also supports the town's industry, while Hopedale Airport, just north of Bellingham, provides a nearby air travel option with essential services.

In recent years, the Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority has introduced transit services, including the North and South Bellingham Shuttles, connecting residents to the Franklin commuter rail station and major commercial and residential centers. Additionally, the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT), a former rail line extending from Franklin State Forest through Bellingham and into Connecticut, was developed in the past 5 years. In Blackstone, this trail is part of the paved Blackstone River Greenway, offering multi-use recreation opportunities. While Bellingham has limited sidewalks and bike trails, the Master Plan includes recommendations to expand these for both pedestrian access and recreational use. The Master Plan also recognizes town planning and zoning efforts to support mixed use development to support dense walkable residential neighborhoods on small lots with recreational or open space nearby.

Land use control in Bellingham is primarily regulated through the town's Zoning By-Law, with zoning districts illustrated in Map 3. A "cluster" or "open space" development by-law allows reduced lot sizes in exchange for conservation land dedication, supporting open space preservation. The Conservation Commission also enforces the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, and Water Resource Districts protect the town's water supply through restrictions on impervious surface coverage, storage of hazardous materials, and septic tank use. A build-out analysis by MAPC in 2003 estimated the ultimate population under current zoning at 20,411, approximately 35% higher than the town's 2014 population of 16,564. The projected population for 2030 is 17,356, suggesting that buildout may still be years away. However, potential zoning

changes and Chapter 40B developments, which can bypass zoning restrictions, could impact this timeline.

Bellingham's infrastructure also includes a town water system, which serves much of the community using gravel-packed wells; areas not served by the municipal system rely on private wells. The town's sewer system has been built in phases. Phase I, completed around 1990, connects the Pilgrim Village neighborhood to Franklin's system, while Phase II, finished in the mid-1990s, connects parts of the Wethersfield neighborhood and areas along Mechanic Street to Franklin and Woonsocket's systems. Recently the towns DPW also submitted and received approval for the upgrading of an existing well system for the treatment of PerAnd Polyfluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS).

In southern Bellingham, sewer service extends along Newland Avenue to Center Street and down Lizotte Drive to Pulaski Boulevard, crossing the Peters River to connect with Woonsocket's system. A comprehensive wastewater management plan has recommended a local treatment plant discharging effluent into the ground, offering an alternative to a larger regional plant.

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

3/17/2025

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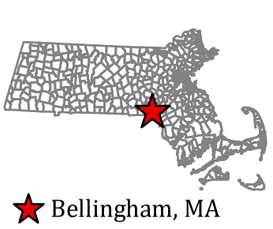
MAP No. 3

Zoning

Legend

DISTRICT

- RESIDENTIAL
- SUBURBAN
- BUSINESS 1
- BUSINESS 2
- INDUSTRIAL
- AGRICULTURE
- MULTI
- Bellingham Town Line
- Interstate
- State Route
- Minor Rds Town
- Minor Roads
- Rivers and Perennial Streams DEP



★ Bellingham, MA

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SECTION 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

4.A Geology, Soils, & Topography

As shown in Map 4, Bellingham is primarily underlain by Avalon Granite bedrock (United States Geological Survey (USGS), n.d.). The northern Bellingham-Franklin border contains a band of mafic rocks, while the central area has felsic volcanic formations. The town's southern end consists of Narragansett Basin sediment, mafic rocks, and some granite deposits.

The area's current topography, characterized by low hills and open valleys, was shaped by glacial ice movements. Most bedrock is covered by glacial deposits, with sand and gravel (Hinckley, Merrimac, and Windsor soils) found at lower elevations, and glacial till (Charlton and Montauk soils) covering the hills. As the glacier retreated, lakes drained, and rivers formed, depositing alluvium (mainly organic matter, fine sand, and silt, with some fine gravel) along waterways (U.S.D.A., undated).

Map 4 also shows the diverse soil types across Bellingham. Development has been influenced by these soil characteristics, especially in southeast Bellingham and an area south of Bellingham Center along Route 126, where the Woodbridge-Paxton-Montauk soil type, classified as Prime Farmland, predominates. Another Prime Farmland area is in northeast Bellingham, now the site of Maplegate Country Club.

The town's topography varies in elevation from just under 200 feet above sea level in the south to around 300-350 feet in the central area, and from 250 to 300 feet in the north. The Charles River area is near 200 feet (MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS).

While soil and topography impact specific parcels, overall, Bellingham's geology, soils, and topography do not significantly limit development, given the general soil types and the availability of water and sewer infrastructure in much of the town.

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 05/17/2024

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0.4 0.2 0 0.4 mi

Map No. 4

Surficial Geology

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Interstate Route
- State Route
- Local Street
- Impervious Surface
- Lakes & Ponds

Rivers & Streams

- *Perennial*
- *Intermittent*

- USDA Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Bedrock Outcrops
- Hydric Soils

Surficial Geology:

- Artificial Fill
- Floodplain Alluvium
- Swamp Deposits
- Glacial Stratified Deposits
- Thick Till
- Thin Till



★ Bellingham, MA

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Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 05/17/2024

N

2,000 1,000 0 2,000 ft

0.4 0.2 0 0.4 mi

Map No. 5

Bedrock Geology

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Interstate Route
- State Route
- Local Street
- Lakes & Ponds

Rivers & Streams

- *Perennial*
- *Intermittent*

Bedrock Type:

- Bellingham Conglomerate (PZb)
- Quincy Granite (SOqgr)
- Blackstone Group (Zb)
- Biotite Granite (Zgr)
- Mattapan Volcanic Complex (Zm)
- Milford Granite (Zmgd)



★ Bellingham, MA

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Map 5- Bedrock Geology

4.B Water Resources

The town is divided by two (2) watersheds: the Charles River Watershed, which encompasses the northern portion of town, and the Peters River-Blackstone River Watershed, which encompasses the southern portion of town (see Map 1). Key water bodies include:

Lakes and Ponds:

- Jenks Reservoir
- Lake Hiawatha
- Silver Lake
- Lakeview Pond
- Box Pond
- Long Pond
- Lily Hole
- Curtis Pond
- Crystal Lake
- Beaver Pond

Rivers and Streams:

- Peters River
- Stall Brook
- Bungay Brook
- Arnold's Brook
- Beaver Brook
- Hoag Brook
- Hopping Brook



Jenks Reservoir (Open Space ID 74/75)

Table 3 identifies the water quality status of the major water bodies that have been assessed by the state.

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 11/03/2024

N

2,000 1,000 0 2,000 ft

0.4 0.2 0 0.4 mi

Map No. 6
Water Resources

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Interstate Route
- State Route
- Local Street
- Lakes & Ponds

Rivers & Streams

Perennial Intermittent

Waterbody Impairment Classes

Lakes/Ponds	Rivers/Streams	Class
		3
		4A
		4C
		5

Potential Drinking Water Aquifers

Potential Source Non-Potential Source

Wellhead Protection Areas

Zone 1 Zone 2

FEMA Flood Zones

Zone A Zone AE

Floodway Zone X (shaded)

Wetlands

Wooded Non-Wooded

Drinking Water Wells

Surface Water Supply Watershed



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Table 3. Bellingham Surface Water Quality Issues

Name	Watershed	Segment ID	Class	MA Integrated List Category* (MassDEP, 2023)	Size	Water Quality Issues
Jenks Reservoir	Blackstone	MA51075	B	4C	28 acres	Habitat uses impacted by non-native aquatic plants
Lake Hiawatha	Blackstone	MA51062	B	3	58 acres	Not assessed for any uses
Silver Lake	Blackstone	MA51150	B	4C	42 acres	Habitat uses impacted by non-native aquatic plants
Peters River	Blackstone	MA51-18	B	5	4 miles from the headwaters outlet at Silver Lake in Bellingham to the Rhode Island border east of Route 126	*E. coli* limits primary and secondary contact recreation uses and temperature impairments limits some aquatic wildlife
Arnold's Brook	Blackstone	MA51-32	B	5	1.7 Miles from outlet of unnamed pond at Whitehall Way in Bellingham to mouth at confluence with Peters River in Bellingham	*E. coli* limits primary contact recreation uses
Lakeview Pond	Blackstone	Not Assessed	--	--	--	--
Bungay Brook	Blackstone	Not Assessed	--	--	--	--
Charles River	Charles	MA72-04	B	5	11.5 miles in Bellingham from its outlet Box Pond in Bellingham to its inlet at Populatic Pond in Norfolk/Medway	Unsupportive of fish consumption for mercury in fish tissue. Aquatic and wildlife habitat is limited due to issues like chronic aquatic toxicity, chlordane and DDT in fish tissue. Primary and Secondary contact recreation may be limited by *E. coli*. There are also eutrophication problems from high nutrient loads and flow impairments from dams.
Beaver Brook	Charles	MA72-12	B	5	1.4 miles from the outlet at Beaver Pond in Bellingham to its confluence with the Charles River in Bellingham	*E. coli* limits primary contact recreation uses
Beaver Pond	Charles	MA72004	B	4A	87 acres	Fish Consumption is not supported due to mercury in fish tissue
Box Pond	Charles	Not Assessed	--	--	--	--
Stall Brook	Charles	Not Assessed	--	--	--	--

* Category 2 = Attaining some uses; other uses not assessed.

Category 3 = Insufficient data to evaluate use impairments.

Category 4A = An EPA-approved TMDL has been developed and implemented.

Category 4C = Impairment not caused by a pollutant.

Category 5 = Waters are impaired and do not meet the specified designated uses due to the presence of one or more pollutants. A TMDL or equivalent pollutant reduction and mitigation measures are required.

-- = Information not available.

The Charles River, originating in Hopkinton and flowing through 23 cities and towns to Boston Harbor, faces challenges like streamflow and stormwater runoff, despite improved water quality since 1995. The Blackstone River, beginning near Worcester and flowing through 29 towns to Pawtucket, RI, is similarly impacted by stormwater runoff, sediment, and wastewater discharge.

While none of Bellingham's surface water bodies are used for drinking water, the town's public water supply is drawn from wells tapping aquifers linked to these bodies. Bellingham has two main aquifer types: sand and gravel aquifers, which are shallow and capable of yielding large volumes of water suitable for municipal wells, and bedrock aquifers, supplying domestic wells that are drilled deeper and yield lower volumes.

Map 6 outlines the town's Zone I and Zone II wellhead protection areas serve as recharge areas critical for feeding municipal wells. Additionally, sand and gravel aquifers in town located near surface water bodies are also important for water yield and are worthy of protection.

Wetlands, primarily around the Charles and Peters Rivers, support flood water storage, wildlife habitat, and water purification, especially near aquifers. These areas are protected under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Bellingham Wetlands Protection Bylaw (2010), enforced by the Conservation Commission. Additional protections are in place under the Water Resource District bylaws.



North Bellingham Dam on the Charles River (Open Space ID 6/7/18)

Flood hazard areas primarily follow along major water bodies like the Charles and Peters Rivers, Beaver Pond, Lake Hiawatha, and Jenks Reservoir. These flood hazard areas are shown on Map 5 and detailed on FEMA maps available online or at Bellingham Town Hall.

4.C Vegetation

Bellingham supports a diverse range of vegetation due to varied soil types and hydrological conditions. Native forests feature a mix of oak, red maple, and white pine, along with understory plants like witch hazel, swamp azalea, and high bush blueberry. These woodlands provide scenic value, recreational opportunities for activities such as hiking, and crucial wildlife habitats.

4.C.1 Forested Areas

Larger blocks of uninterrupted woodlands are valuable for local biodiversity and serve as scenic backdrops. These areas provide habitat for deer, fox, and numerous bird species, and they offer opportunities for hunting and wildlife observation.

4.C.2 Public Shade Trees

Public shade trees are protected under Massachusetts General Laws, with additional protection along Scenic Roads, requiring hearings prior to removal. Bellingham also mandates shade tree preservation or planting in new developments, enhancing scenic character and offering shade, which benefits both the local economy and public enjoyment.

4.C.3 Agricultural Land

The town includes some agricultural parcels that offer scenic and ecological value, supporting both open space and habitat for species like kestrel and meadowlark.

4.C.4 Wetland Vegetation

Wetlands, rich in species diversity, include plants such as pickerelweed, sedges, and sphagnum moss. Red maple swamps are common with understories including species like dewberry, cinnamon fern, sphagnum, and skunk cabbage. These areas contribute to flood control, water filtration, and recreational activities like birdwatching, adding to their ecological and community value.



Flooded wetlands around the Peters River – Wood Duck habitat

4.C.5 Unique Natural Resources

The town contains several vernal pools, which serve as essential breeding grounds for amphibians and contribute to Bellingham's ecological diversity.

4.D Fisheries & Wildlife

Bellingham supports diverse wildlife due to its varied habitats that offer a variety of vegetative cover, hydrology, and food sources. The town is home to mammals like foxes, beavers, raccoons, deer, and coyotes, along with birds such as hawks, owls, pheasants, and songbirds. Reptiles and amphibians, including garter snakes, snapping turtles, and spotted salamanders, are common in both woodlands and wetland areas, with vernal pools providing critical breeding grounds for amphibians. Bellingham vernal pools support species including fairy shrimp, wood turtles, wood frogs, spotted salamanders and caddisflies. Certified and potential vernal pools, marked on Map 8, are important breeding areas for wildlife and are protected under the Wetlands Protection Act and Bellingham Wetland Protection Bylaw Regulations. Bellingham has 21 state certified vernal pools. At least 25 additional vernal pools, while not state certified, have been identified as vernal pools under the Bellingham Wetlands Protection Bylaw Regulations.

Local aquatic habitats in rivers, lakes, and ponds – particularly the Charles and Blackstone Rivers – support fish species such as brown, brook, and rainbow trout, pickerel, perch, sunfish,

redbreast, pumpkinseed, small- and large-mouth bass, white sucker, carp, golden shiner, fallfish, creek chub, and yellow and brown bullhead. Arnold's Brook and Peter's River are also identified as cold water fisheries. Cold water fisheries are an important resource that supports cold water fish species like Brook Trout. These fisheries are more at risk for degradation from land use and climate change. The cold water fish species these watercourses support are more sensitive to changes in water temperature. The Peters River is already listed as an impaired waterbody (Table 3), in part due to temperature changes that may impact the future function of the fishery.

4.D.1 Rare & Endangered Species

Table 4 lists Bellingham's documented rare and endangered species, including scientific and common names, taxonomic class, state rank, and the latest recorded sightings provided by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's (DFW) Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Six rare species have been identified within town borders.

Table 4. Bellingham's Rare and Endangered Species

Scientific Name	Common Name	Taxonomic Class	Status	**Most Recent Observation** (; United States Fish & Wildlife Service, n.d.)
Ambystoma opacum	Marbled Salamander	Amphibian	State Threatened	2022
Ambystoma jeffersonianum	Jefferson Salamander	Amphibian	State Species of Special Concern	
Ambystoma laterale pop. 1	Blue-Spotted Salamander	Amphibian	State Species of Special Concern	
Scaphiopus holbrookii	Eastern Spadefoot	Amphibian	State Threatened	
Terrapene carolina	Eastern Box Turtle	Reptile	State Species of Special Concern	2011
Glyptemys insculpta	Wood Turtle	Reptile	State Species of Special Concern	2022
Emydoidea blandingii	Blanding's Turtle	Reptile	State Threatened	
Heterodon platirhinos	Eastern Hog-Nosed Snake	Reptile	State Species of Special Concern	
Agkistrodon contortrix	Copperhead	Reptile	State Endangered	
Lethenteron appendix	American Brook Lamprey	Fish	State Threatened	2011
Notropis bifrenatus	Bridle Shiner	Fish	State Species of Special Concern	
Strophitus undulatus	Creeper (mussel)	Mollusk	State Species of Special Concern	
Ligumia nasuta	Eastern Pondmussel	Mollusk	State Species of Special Concern	
Myotis septentrionalis	Northern Long-Eared Bat	Mammal	State & Federal Endangered	No sightings reported, but hibernacula are located within 50-miles of our town (Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), n.d.)
	Little Brown Bat	Mammal	State Endangered	

Scientific Name	Common Name	Taxonomic Class	Status	**Most Recent Observation** (; United States Fish & Wildlife Service, n.d.)
Myotis lucifugus				
Perimyotis subflavus	Tricolored Bat	Mammal	State Endangered	
Antrostomus vociferus	Eastern Whip-poor-will	Bird	State Species of Special Concern	
Falco peregrinus	Peregrine Falcon	Bird	State Threatened	2020
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Bird	State Species of Special Concern	2013
Danaus plexippus	Monarch Butterfly	Insect	Candidate for Federal Listing	2022
Goodyera repens	Dwarf Rattlesnake-plantain	Vascular Plant	State Endangered	1886
Panicum philadelphicum	Philadelphia Panicgrass	Vascular Plant	State Species of Special Concern	1986
Aristida purpurascens	Purple Needlegrass	Vascular Plant	State Threatened	1894

Bellingham contains Priority Habitats and Estimated Habitats designated by the DFW, crucial areas for protecting rare species and mapped for public awareness. Map 8 illustrates three such Priority Habitat areas in Bellingham:

- Peters River Priority Habitat: Located south of Silver Lake and intersected by the SNETT, this area provides critical wetland protection.
- Box Pond Habitat: Found south of Route 140, west of the town center.
- Lake Hiawatha Habitat: Extends from the north of Lake Hiawatha into Blackstone, supporting biodiversity.

These habitats require ongoing protection to support Bellingham's unique biodiversity. The Massachusetts BioMap and Living Waters initiatives identify these areas as vital for conservation, guiding local preservation efforts.

4.D.2 Wildlife Migration Corridors

Natural corridors facilitate wildlife migration and maintain genetic diversity in Bellingham. Key corridors include:

- Peters River Corridor: Connected to Silver Lake by protected wetlands and essential for species mobility.
- SNETT Linkages: Connecting Peters River to Franklin State Forest and, ultimately, to Harris Pond in Blackstone.
- Pipeline Corridor: Extends from Priority Habitats south of Box Pond to the Charles River corridor.

Preserving these corridors through land protection ensures continued habitat connectivity essential for local biodiversity.

4.E Scenic Resources & Unique Environments

Bellingham's scenic landscapes enhance its rural character, with views along the Peters and Charles Rivers and prominent scenic roads like High Street, Maple Street, and Farm Street. High Street provides a protected view of the Charles River as part of the Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area.



View of the Charles River From the High Street Parcel (Open Space ID 25)

Historic sites include the Maple Street Mill, Pearl Street Dam (removed in 2016 to restore natural river flow), and the Old Town Hall in Bellingham Center, dating back to 1802. These sites, along with scenic roadways lined with stone walls and mature trees, contribute to the town's small-town aesthetic.

Bellingham's unique Bellingham Conglomerate is a significant geological feature consisting of metamorphosed conglomerate, sandstone, and shale, specific to the Bellingham basin.

While Bellingham has no Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), its combination of scenic landscapes, unique geological formations, and preserved habitats creates a distinctive environment valuable to the town's character.

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 03/05/2024

N

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MAP No. 7

Unique Features

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- Other Streets
- Scenic Roads
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Streams

Notable Features

- Beach/Swimming Access
- Campground - Private
- Cemetery
- Clubhouse/Event Venue
- Community Center
- Community Garden
- Farmer's Market
- Fire Station
- Golf Course
- Library
- Notable Topographic Feature
- Police Station
- Post Office
- Public Access Point
- Recreational Park
- Scenic View
- School
- Town Hall

Historic Districts

- Inventoried Property
- National Register of Historic Places

Protected Open Space by Owner Type with Public Access (Full & Limited)

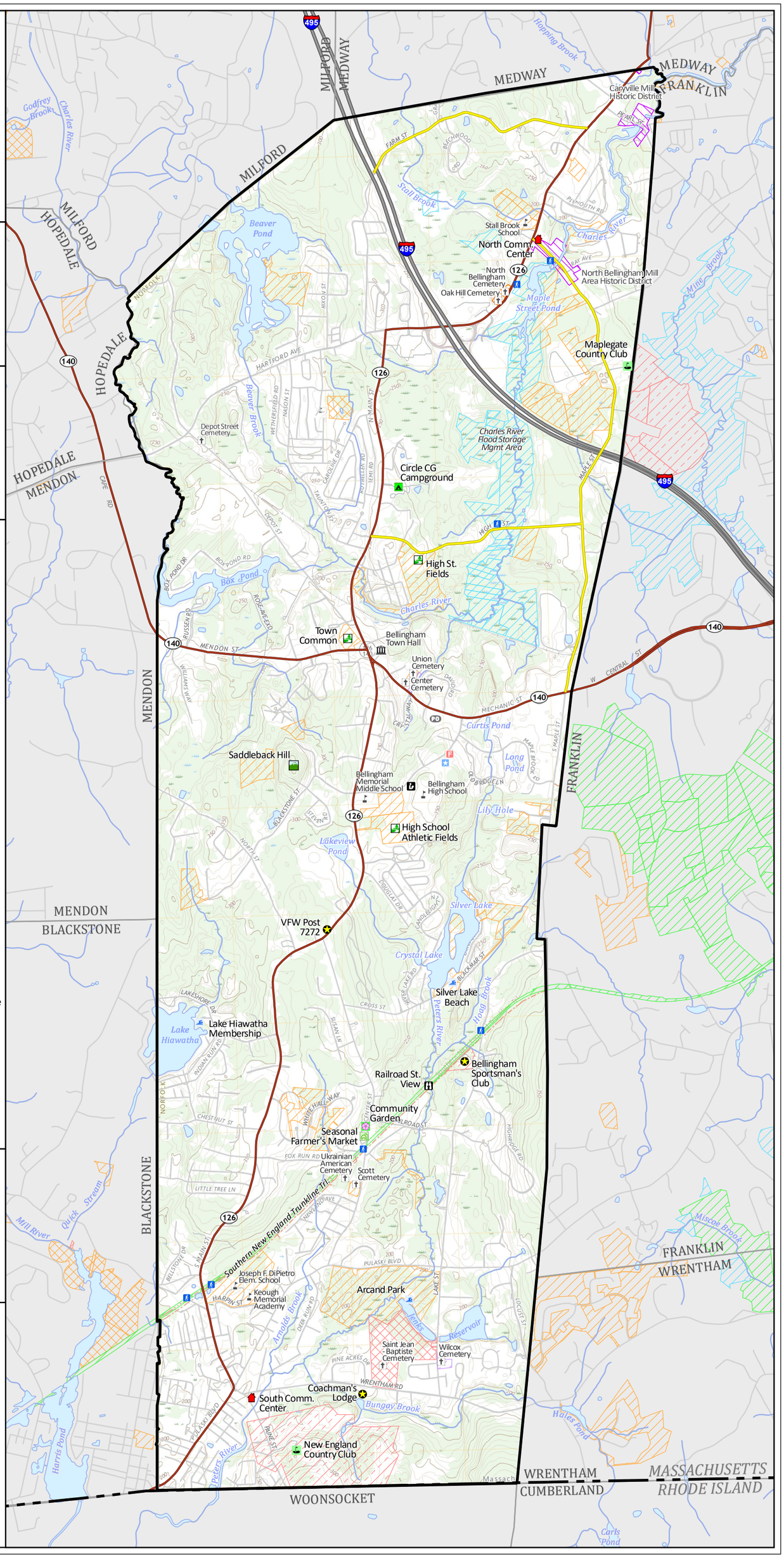
- Federal, Full Public Access
- State, Full Public Access
- Municipal, Full Public Access
- Municipal, Access Unknown
- Non-Profit, Limited Access
- Private, Full Public Access
- Private, Limited Access
- Private, Access Unknown



★ Bellingham, MA

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4.F Climate Change Impacts

Efforts to further understand the impacts of climate change were evaluated through a collaborative effort between the towns of Bellingham and Franklin in September 2020 (Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), 2020). Top climate hazards identified for our area consist of flooding, severe storms, drought, and extreme heat. The Community Resilience Building Workshop report prepared for Bellingham and Franklin in September 2020 cites several notable climatological events:

- (March and) April 2010 – Record rainfall (nearly 20 inches over several intermittent periods in March) resulting in severe flooding necessitating a state disaster declaration.
- Winter 2014-2015 – Record snow accumulation (roughly 110 inches) from multiple winter storm events. Some places in Massachusetts also broke record low temperatures in February 2015.
- Second half of 2016 – Near record drought conditions (Level 4 – 'warning' – out of 5 for about 6 months, with additional periods of drought 'watch' and 'advisory' through most of the year)
- Winter 2018 – Severe winter storms (multiple Nor'easters and a "bomb cyclone") resulted in a state disaster declaration.
- 2014-2018 – The five hottest years on record globally.

Climatology in the years after this report was completed has certainly lived up to these expectations. Some notable climatological events that affected us after completion of this report include:

- Significant drought periods have been observed in Bellingham from July 2020 through the end of October 2020, in March 2021, from May 2022 through August 2022, and from October 2024 through the end of February 2025 (Drought Management Task Force. Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, n.d.).
- On a balmy 60°F Christmas Day of 2020, Bellingham received roughly 2-inches of rain, flooding several roadways in South Bellingham and making them impassible, especially by sleigh.
- In October 2020, an EF0 tornado touched down in nearby Millis in association with a derecho. At the end of July 2023, an EF0 tornado associated with severe thunderstorms was confirmed in Foxborough and Mansfield (National Weather Service (NWS) Boston, n.d.). On August 18, 2023, September 13, 2023, and June 26, 2024, tornado outbreaks with tornado intensities ranging from EF0 to EF2 caused significant tree and property damage, with one injury reported, across eastern Connecticut, northern Rhode Island, and several Massachusetts towns situated along the boundary of Norfolk and Bristol Counties (National Weather Service (NWS) Boston, n.d.). One of the tornadoes spawned by the August 18, 2023 storm system was the strongest in Rhode Island since 1986, and

nationally, three of the seven record-setting tornado outbreaks in recorded history of the United States have occurred since October 2020 (a fourth record-setting event occurred in Spring 2020). Tornado outbreaks are expected to become more frequent as storms become more intense due to climate change.

- In February 2023, near-record low temperatures and dangerous wind chills were measured as a result of an arctic airmass moving across the region (National Weather Service (NWS) Boston, n.d.). Temperatures dropping below 0°F with 30-50 mph winds created windchills in Bellingham estimated around -40°F during the “arctic blast.” Extreme cold events like this are expected to become more common as a result of climate change, due to atmospheric convection processes.
- Between June and August 2023, Bellingham received more than 8-inches of excess precipitation compared to the 30-year historical averages provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) (Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow (CoCoRaHS) Network, n.d.). July 2023 was the wettest July on record for Hartford, and the second wettest July on record for Boston, Providence, and Worcester (National Weather Service (NWS) Boston, n.d.).
- Between 2021 and the first half of 2025, eight 2-year storm events and one 10-year storm event were measured at Bellingham gauging stations (TP-40 24-hour) (Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow (CoCoRaHS) Network, n.d.). Typically, 2-year storm events are predicted to occur once every two years, while 10-year storm events are predicted to occur once every 10-years.
- 2016, 2019, 2020, 2023 and 2024 are the new five hottest years on record globally, with 2024 being the first year where the average global temperature exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Open space is a critical resource in the race to mitigate the effects of climate change. Wetland resources are important flood water storage reservoirs and mitigate the effects of flooding on surrounding developed areas. Pervious open space surfaces also provide space for stormwater flows to dissipate, mitigating erosion, and recharge the town’s drinking water aquifer. Vegetated open spaces provide sources of water uptake and storage, a necessity as storm intensity increases. Taller vegetation like trees also provide shaded spaces for people to enjoy during increasingly warmer weather. Trees and other vegetation are also an important source of carbon sequestration in the global effort to mitigate climate change.

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 06/23/2024

N

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0.4 0.2 0 0.4 mi

Map No. 8

Environmental Challenges

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Interstate Route
- State Route
- Local Streets
- School
- DEP Wetlands
- NHESP Vernal Pools (Certified / Potential)
- NHESP Priority Habitat
- Env. Justice Areas (2020)

Drinking Water Resources

- Zone I WPA
- Zone II WPA
- Surface Water Protection Area

Aquifers by Drinking Water Potential

- Potential
- Non-Potential

Flood Zones

- 100-Year
- 500-Year

Release Sites

- Active
- Inactive
- AUL
- Brownfield
- CERCLA NFRAP

Other Contamination Sources

- MassDEP Major Facilities
- UST
- Composter
- Recycler
- Landfills

Waterbody Impairment Classes

- 3
- 4A
- 4C
- 5
- Unassessed Lakes & Ponds

Unassessed Rivers & Streams

- Perennial
- Intermittent



Bellingham, MA

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SECTION 5 – INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION INTEREST

A critical responsibility in long-range municipal planning is protecting lands of conservation and recreation interest. Approximately 22% of the land in Bellingham is currently considered open space, though the primary purpose, uses, ownership, and level of protection of these lands vary. A summary of our total open space is provided in Table 5, below, and terms used in this table are further defined in the following sections.

Table 5. Open Space Summary

Primary Ownership Type & Protection Type	Primary Purpose	Total Area (Acres)	% of Total
Federal		**342.47**	**12.90%**
Federally Owned		**342.47**	**12.90%**
	Flood Control	342.47	12.90%
Municipal (Town of Bellingham)		**1,203.38**	**45.34%**
Conservation Restriction		**32.21**	**1.21%**
	Conservation	32.21	1.21%
Municipally Owned		**1,171.16**	**44.13%**
	Conservation	639.69	24.10%
	Historical	8.38	0.32%
	Recreation	361.12	13.61%
	Water Supply	161.99	6.10%
Private		**1,075.97**	**40.54%**
Conservation Restriction		**258.87**	**9.75%**
	Conservation	200.81	7.57%
	Flood Control	28.47	1.07%
	Water Supply	29.59	1.11%
M.G.L. Ch. 61		**414.10**	**15.60%**
	61 - Forest	205.73	7.75%
	61A - Agriculture	175.59	6.62%
	61B - Recreation	32.78	1.24%
Private Ownership		**403.00**	**15.19%**
	Historical	84.47	3.18%
	Recreation	318.52	12.00%
State		**32.04**	**1.21%**
State Owned		**32.04**	**1.21%**
	Recreation	32.04	1.21%
Grand Total		**2,653.86**	**100.00%**

Note:

Several parcels owned by the Town of Bellingham also contain conservation restrictions granted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Charles River Natural Valley Storage Area project. An additional parcel has a conservation restriction on it for water supply protection, and is classified as M.G.L. Ch. 61 land. The area of duplicate parcels was excluded from the table to show, to the best of our knowledge, an accurate total acreage of open space.

5.A Types of Open Space

The term “open space” refers to many different types of land, typically conservation land, forested land, recreation land, agricultural land, and amenities such as green buffers along roadways or any other predominantly undeveloped area that is owned by an agency or organization dedicated to conservation or recreation.

Open space can be used for passive recreation, which is defined as any outdoor activity that occurs in a natural setting with minimum disturbance of the natural and cultural resources and that is consistent with quiet enjoyment of the land. Examples of passive recreation include walking, hiking, and birdwatching.

Open space can also be used for active recreation, defined as outdoor recreation that requires significant alteration of the natural landscape to provide a suitable space for the type of recreational activity. Examples of active recreation include a playground, baseball and associated field(s), and even maintained walking, hiking, and cycling paths.

Bellingham has a unique mixture of lands considered open space. In this report, Bellingham’s open space is classified into different categories based on the following criteria:

Ownership – Bellingham has open space that is owned by the town, state, and federal agencies, as well as privately-owned parcels that are considered open space due to a conservation restriction or their classification under M.G.L. Chapter 61. Other properties in Bellingham that are considered open space may be privately owned with no level of protection.

Primary Purpose – Bellingham has a wide variety of open space, with primary purposes of agriculture, conservation, forestry, recreation, historical value, water supply, and flood control.

The interaction between ownership and purpose of the open space often dictates its level of protection.

Publicly Owned Conservation and Recreation Land

Public conservation and recreation lands are often protected under Article 97 of the Articles of Amendment to the State Constitution. Article 97 of the Amendments to the Constitution of Massachusetts protects the right of the people of the Commonwealth to “clean air and water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise, and the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic qualities of their environment”. Article 97 land includes conservation land purchased by or granted to a municipality if it *is dedicated to a public conservation purpose.* Article 97 land includes things like parks and recreation land, land held by a conservation commission, town commons, water supply protection land, agricultural preservation restriction and conservation restrictions. As such all town owned conservation commission held land described in this plan is subject to the protections

granted by Article 97. This protects publicly held natural resources by declaring that conservation of natural resources is a public purpose and provides that any land or easements subject to Article 97 shall not be used for other purposes than the conservation or recreation it was dedicated to, or disposed of without a 2/3rds roll call vote in the Legislature.

Examples of significant town owned conservation or recreation land protected by Article 97 includes the Town Common the conservation land and recreational fields at High Street fields. There are beaches and passive recreational spaces at both Jenks Reservoir (Arcand Park) and Silver Lake.

The Massachusetts Division of State Parks and Recreation (DCR) also outright owns protected recreation land in Bellingham. The abandoned railbed known as the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) is owned and maintained by the DCR.

There are also approximately 406.61 acres of land held by the federal government, primarily along the Charles River corridor, held for the purpose of water resource protection and flood control. They own 334.69 acres in fee. These holdings are part of the Corps' Charles River Natural Valley Storage Project and are protected under outright federal ownership of the properties.



North Bellingham Dam at the intersection between federal land dedicated to flood storage, and municipal conservation land on Maple Street.

Drinking Water Protection

Designated wellhead areas have additional protections associated with their use as a public water resources. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) groundwater sources. MassDEP Drinking Water Regulations require public water suppliers to own or control the Zone I of a public well. The town of Bellingham manages a significant amount of land for municipal water supply managed primarily by the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Conservation Restrictions

Both public and private parcels can be protected through the use of deed restrictions, or conservation easements, known in Massachusetts as Conservation Restrictions. Land can be owned by private individuals, a municipality, a state, an organization etc. who give up the right to develop their property through a deed restriction. Although they may own the land, all or portions of a property can then be protected from future development, or restricted to specific land uses. It should be noted that some non-statutory easements only run for a period of 30 years and those lands are therefore not permanently protected open space. When land under a conservation restriction is privately owned, it often is not open to the public and therefore restricts recreation opportunities. However these areas important to the protection of natural resources.

There is a specific type of CR called an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR). The Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program is a voluntary program that enables farmers to access the financial value of their land without needing to sell it. Through federal, state, and local funds, the Massachusetts Dept. of Agricultural Resources can pay farmland owners the difference between the “fair market value” and the “agricultural value” of their farms in exchange for a permanent deed restriction to retain the land for farming. There is one property restricted with an APR on Lakeview Farms on Main Street totaling 95.5 acres.

The federal government also employs tool for the purpose of their water resource protection and flood control goals of Charles River corridor and hold conservation easements on another 72 acres of land.

Chapter 61

M.G.L. Ch. 61 allows private property owners meeting certain conditions to reduce their property tax owed provided they maintain certain conservation and/or recreation uses on their property. Ch. 61 pertains to forested lands, Ch. 61A pertains to certain agricultural lands, and Ch. 61B pertains to certain recreational uses, such as golf courses, camping areas, target shooting ranges, and horseback riding. M.G.L. Ch. 61-61B generally provide limited levels of protection that are only temporary and based on. Should a landowner holding Chapter 61, 61A or 61B decide to sell and change the use of the land, the town has the right of first refusal on the property ownership.

Historic Use

Although not protected for conservation or recreation purposes, another open space land use in town is for cemetery use. Although not afforded other formal open space protections, cemeteries are protected primarily by its functional or traditional use. There are a number of both public and private cemeteries in town listed in Table 6. Cemeteries owned by the town are held under the management of the Cemetery Commission. Private cemeteries are historically significant private property thus their use as a cemetery is unlikely to change.

Private Recreation

Lastly, private recreation sites in town are afforded no protections. Private facilities include the New England Country Club in south Bellingham, the Circle CG Campgrounds, and the Bellingham Sportsman Club, identified in Table 6. While not available to the general public, these facilities add to the diversity of recreation opportunities in Bellingham

In some of cases, a parcel of land is protected by more than one method or statute. For example there is one property owned by the town of Bellingham controlled by the Conservation Commission, protecting it under Article 97 and a local non profit may have a conservation restriction for a portion of the property. For example one property (open space ID 14) is owned by the conservation commission with a conservation restriction from the Metacomet Land Trust. Town land purchased to protect the public water supply are often protected subject to Article 97, however, portions of those properties are also protected by the Wetlands Protection Act or local zoning regulations. The below Table 6 and Map 9 describe and depict the complex landscape of Open Space in the town. See Map 6 for a depiction of publicly accessible municipal and state conservation land in relation to local landmarks and other town features.

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 02/16/2025

N

2,000 1,000 0 2,000 ft

0.4 0.2 0 0.4 mi

Map No. 9

Open Space

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Interstate Route
- State Route
- Local Street
- Easements
- Lakes & Ponds

Rivers & Streams

Perennial *Intermittent*

Open Space by Owner Type & Primary Purpose

Conservation Restriction

- Private, Conservation
- Municipal, Conservation
- Municipal, Flood Control
- Private, Flood Control
- Private, Water Supply

M.G.L. Ch. 61 Private Lands

- 61 - Forest
- 61A - Agriculture
- 61B - Recreation

Municipal/State/Federal Lands

- Federal, Flood Control
- Municipal, Conservation
- Municipal, Historical
- Municipal, Recreation
- Municipal, Water Supply
- State, Recreation

Other Private Lands

- Historical use unlikely to change
- Non-M.G.L. Ch. 61 Recreation



★ Bellingham, MA

Statewide datalayers used in preparation of this plan are maintained by the Massachusetts Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS). Town-specific datalayers used in preparation of this plan are maintained by the Town of Bellingham.

While the Town has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this document at the time it was prepared, this document is provided for convenience and informational purposes only and may contain outdated or inaccurate data. The Town of Bellingham makes no claims, no representations, and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability, or the accuracy of the information provided herein, including the implied validity of the uses of such data.

Table 6. Bellingham Open Space Inventory

Open Space Map ID	Open Space Name	Map Block Lot ID	Applies to ___ of the Lot	Area (Acres)	Property Owner	Conservation Restriction Owner (if applicable)	Owner Type	Open Space Ownership Type	Open Space Primary Purpose
1	Granite Street Farm	0002-0002-001A	All	6.09	Granite Street Farm LLC		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61A - Agriculture
2	15 Old Log Lane	0003-0007-0000	All	16.34	Dangelo, Ethan J.		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61A - Agriculture
3	Pearl Street Mill Land	0004-0060-0000	All	20.22	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
4	Con Comm Land - Charles River	0004-0064-0000	All	1.12	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
5	North Field	0009-0025-0000	All	4.75	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0007-008A-0000	All	0.27	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0007-011A-0000	All	9.23	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0012-0054-0000	All	4.02	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0012-0055-0000	All	7.60	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0013-003B-0000	All	9.17	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0013-0059-0000	All	0.71	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0019-0008-0000	All	13.48	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0019-0010-0000	All	6.50	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0019-0011-0000	All	9.83	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0019-0012-0000	All	0.02	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0025-0003-0000	All	7.60	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0025-0004-0000	All	7.58	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0025-0005-0000	All	19.66	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0025-0005-0000	All	3.32	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0025-005A-0000	All	14.84	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-0001-0000	All	47.41	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-001B-0000	All	31.36	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-003A-0000	All	3.05	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-003B-0000	All	3.75	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-003C-0000	All	3.92	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-003D-0000	All	1.56	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0031-003E-0000	All	26.97	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0036-0002-0000	All	2.87	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0002-0000	All	3.92	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0004-0000	All	3.70	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0005-0000	All	2.27	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0006-0000	All	2.24	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0007-0000	All	6.41	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0008-0000	All	3.24	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0009-0000	All	3.10	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0010-0000	All	7.65	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0011-0000	All	4.75	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0041-0012-0000	All	3.63	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-0002-0000	All	8.27	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control

6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-0003-0000	All	15.31	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-0004-0000	All	22.49	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-0005-0000	All	4.71	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-0006-0000	All	11.29	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-0007-0000	All	2.89	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
6	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Area	0046-001A-0000	All	1.90	United States Army Corps of Engineers		Federal	Owned	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0007-0006-0000	Part	7.39	Steve D. Smith Living Trust	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Private	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0007-0007-0001	Part	6.12	Fasland, LLC	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Private	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0008-0003-0000	Part	3.55	N E Power Co.	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Private	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0012-001A-0000	All	7.64	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0013-0005-0000	Part	17.10	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0013-010C-0000	Part	14.46	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0013-012A-0000	Part	7.22	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0019-0009-0000	Part	0.72	Moore, Ralph	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Private	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0020-0020-0000	Part	1.79	Town of Bellingham	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0045-0056-0000	Part	5.23	Town of Bellingham	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
7	ACOE Charles River Flood Management Easements	0047-0001-0000	Part	10.69	Spirit Realty LP	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Private	Conservation Restriction	Flood Control
8	Town Land - ACOE Flood Stg Easement	0013-012A-0000	All	13.27	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
9	Stall Brook School Land	0013-010C-0000	All	29.24	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
10	Con Comm Land	0007-0011-0000	All	19.61	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
11	Water Supply Land - Stall Brook Well Site	0012-001A-0000	All	7.64	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
11	Water Supply Land - Stall Brook Well Site	0013-0005-0000	All	26.73	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
12	Water Supply Land - Stall Brook	0013-009A-0000	All	1.37	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
13	North Bellingham Community Center	0013-0032-0000	All	0.34	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
13	North Bellingham Community Center Playground	0013-0034-0000	All	0.29	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
14	Con Comm Land - Plymouth Road Conservation Area	0014-0050-0000	All	15.72	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
14	Metacomet Land Trust Plymouth Road Conservation Restriction?	0014-0050-0000	All	15.72	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Metacomet Land Trust	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Conservation

15	Con Comm Land - John Alden Circle Parcel	0014-0100-0000	All	12.99	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
16	North Bellingham Cemetery	0019-0002-0001	All	1.22	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Historical
17	Oak Hill Cemetery	0019-0002-0000	All	2.37	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Historical
18	Con Comm Land - Charles River Land Conservation Area	0020-0008-0000	All	7.24	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
18	Con Comm Land - Charles River Land Conservation Area	0020-0020-0000	All	23.38	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
19	Charles River Bellingham CR	0019-0006-0000	Part	7.86	Charles River Bellingham II, LLC	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
20	Con Comm Land - ANP Gift	0026-0003-0000	All	19.14	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
21	Con Comm Land - ANP Gift	0032-0005-0000	All	72.13	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
22	Maplegate Golf Course	0026-0009-0000	All	9.76	Maplegate Realty Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61B - Recreation
22	5 Maple Street (Maplegate Golf Course?)	0026-006A-0000	All	12.28	Gray Wall Realty Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61B - Recreation
22	Maplegate Golf Course	0032-0009-0000	All	3.78	Maplegate Realty Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61B - Recreation
23	Planning Board Open Space	0037-0001-0001	All	0.32	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Historical
24	Con Comm Land - High Street Conservation Area	0042-0002-0001	All	11.91	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
25	Bellingham North Main Street CR	0024-0010-0000	Part	3.12	Bellingham North Main Street LP	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
25	Bellingham North Main Street CR	0024-0012-0000	Part	5.28	Bellingham North Main Street LP	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
26	Jefferson Apts Conservation Restriction	0030-0073-0001	Part	15.14	WS Development	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
27	Clara Macy Fields & Playground	0029-0108-0000	All	11.10	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
28	Water Supply Land - Well #12	0036-0003-0000	All	8.34	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
29	Con Comm Land - R. Belanger Drive Open Space	0017-05FF-0000	All	27.59	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
30	Con Comm Land? (Hixon Street)	0017-003A-0000	All	5.49	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
31	Depot Street Cemetery	0028-0007-0001	All	0.37	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Historical
32	Water Supply Land	0034-0003-0000	All	0.49	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
32	Water Supply Land	0034-0024-0000	All	1.03	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
32	Water Supply Land	0034-01-2-0000	All	9.36	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
32	Water Supply Land	0034-0152-0000	All	2.58	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
32	Water Supply Land	0039-0035-0000	All	10.07	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply

33	Con Comm Land - High St Fields	0040-0019-0000	All	53.61	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
34	Water Supply Land	0045-0056-0000	All	11.66	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
35	Mechanic Street CR	0051-0013-0000	Part	22.59	TR Bellingham LLC	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
36	Union Cemetery	0050-0046-0000	All	7.23	Union Cemetery Co. of Bellingham, Inc.		Private	Private	Historical
37	Town Cemetery	0050-0045-0000	All	1.18	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Historical
38	Town Common	0044-0028-0000	All	7.06	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
39	Planning Board Open Space	0044-0074-0000	All	0.55	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
40	Pine Hollow Estates Conservation Restriction	0049-033A-0000	Part	8.96	Bellwood Condominium Trust	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Condominium Trust	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
40	Pine Hollow Estates Conservation Restriction	0049-033A-ABCE	Part	10.60	Bellwood Condominium Trust	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Condominium Trust	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
40	Pine Hollow Estates Conservation Restriction	0049-033A-ABCE	Part	0.60	Bellwood Condominium Trust	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Condominium Trust	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
40	Pine Hollow Estates Conservation Restriction	0049-033A-ABCE	Part	6.96	Bellwood Condominium Trust	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Condominium Trust	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0048-0001-0000	Part	0.36	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0048-0001-001B	Part	0.61	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0048-0003-0000	Part	6.11	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0048-0003-0000	Part	0.69	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0048-0003-0000	Part	0.32	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0049-XXXX-XXXX	Part	1.05	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0058-0007-0000	Part	1.16	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0058-0007-0000	Part	0.33	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0058-0007-0000	Part	0.30	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
41	Penn Central Con Comm Conveyance	0058-004+-0000	Part	0.46	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation

42	Kearsarge Conservation Restriction	0048-0003-0000	Part	32.21	Kearsarge Energy LP (Town of Bellingham ATTN: PB?)	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Municipal	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
43	Con Comm Land - Saddleback Hill Road Conservation Area	0049-033F-0000	All	5.55	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
44	Blackstone Street Conservation Area	0053-0003-0000	All	18.61	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
45	Planning Board Open Space	0058-001A-0000	All	3.30	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
46	Crystal Springs CR	0050-099B-0001	Part	23.97	Crystal Springs Condominium Association	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
47	Con Comm Land - Maple Sands Conservation Area	0061-0001-0011	All	2.52	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
47	Con Comm Land - Maple Sands Conservation Area	0061-0001-0012	All	9.82	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
48	Bellingham Junior & Senior High School Athletic Fields	0060-0008-0000	Part	15.16	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
49	Blackstone Fields	0060-0007-0000	Part	23.66	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
50	Wenger Farm	0059-0005-0000	All	97.50	Wengar, Omar H & Barbara E		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61A - Agriculture
51	Planning Board Open Space	0058-0013-OSP1	All	0.47	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
51	Planning Board Open Space	0058-0013-OSP2	All	3.66	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
51	Planning Board Open Space	0058-0013-OSP3	All	0.59	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
51	Planning Board Open Space	0058-0013-OSP4	All	19.16	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
52	Lynn Court	0058-0023-0000	All	0.99	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
53	Con Comm Land - Blackstone Fields Estates Conservation Area	0062-0004-0000	All	14.72	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
54	Planning Board Open Space	0072-0014-OSP1	All	77.01	Fargon, LLC	Town of Bellingham Planning Board? (Proposed?)	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
54	Planning Board Open Space	0072-0014-OSP2	All	10.12	Fargon, LLC	Town of Bellingham Planning Board? (Proposed?)	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
54	Planning Board Open Space	0072-0014-OSP3	All	8.60	Fargon, LLC	Town of Bellingham Planning Board? (Proposed?)	Private	Conservation Restriction	Conservation
55	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake Beach	0072-0025-0000	All	18.41	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
56	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake Conservation Area	0065-0001-0000	All	17.08	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
56	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake	0065-0007-0000	All	0.11	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
56	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake	0065-0009-0000	All	0.22	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
56	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake	0065-0013-0000	All	0.01	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation

56	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake	0065-007A-0000	All	0.12	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
56	Con Comm Land - Silver Lake	0069-0031-0000	All	0.14	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
57	Crooks Estate - Lake Street	0073-0002-0000	All	32.20	Estate of Marcia & Donna Crooks		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
57	Crooks Estate - Lake Street	0073-0003-0000	All	21.08	Estate of Marcia & Donna Crooks		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
57	Crooks Estate - Lake Street	0073-0003-0000	All	63.52	Estate of Marcia & Donna Crooks		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
58	Southern New England Trunkline Trail	0080-015A-0000	All	17.30	Commonwealth of Massachusetts		State	Owned	Recreation
58	Southern New England Trunkline Trail	0080-015E-0000	All	14.74	Commonwealth of Massachusetts		State	Owned	Recreation
59	Water Supply Land - Wells #1 & 2	0072-0010-0000	All	37.30	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
59	Water Supply Land - Wells #1 & 2	0073-002A-0000	All	6.10	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
60	Wells #1 & 2 Conservation Restriction	0080-0008-0001	All	29.59	Staples, David A	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works	Private	Conservation Restriction	Water Supply
60	Wells #1 & 2 Conservation Restriction	0080-0008-000A	All	38.54	Galipeau, Donna M	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works	Private	Conservation Restriction	Water Supply
61	Railroad Street Land	0080-0008-0000	All	17.13	Galipeau, Donna M		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61A - Agriculture
61	Railroad Street Land	0080-0008-000A	All	38.54	Galipeau, Donna M		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61A - Agriculture
62	Bellingham Sportsmen Club	0077-0005-0000	All	6.97	Bellingham Sportsmen Club		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61B - Recreation
63	Con Comm Land - Highridge Estates Open Space	0081-0001-0000	All	132.53	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
64	Con Comm Land - Boy Scouts Gift	0081-0003-0000	All	10.68	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
65	Con Comm Land - Bellingham Estates Conservation Area	0075-0016-0000	All	19.67	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
65	Con Comm Land - Bellingham Estates Conservation Area	0075-0016-000A	All	13.58	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
66	Scott Street Land	0083-0118-0000	All	5.10	Fleuette Family Revocable Living Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
66	Scott Street Land	0083-0119-0000	All	12.89	Fleuette Family Revocable Living Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
66	Scott Street Land	0083-0120-0000	All	5.04	Fleuette Family Revocable Living Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
67	Ukranian American Cemetery	0080-0001-0000	All	1.72	Ukranian Progressive Society		Private Non-Profit	Private	Historical
67	Ukranian American Cemetery	0080-0002-0000	All	8.17	Ukranian Progressive Society		Private Non-Profit	Private	Historical
67	Ukranian American Cemetery	0083-0078-0000	All	0.36	Ukranian Progressive Society		Private Non-Profit	Private	Historical
68	Scott Cemetery	0083-0084-0000	All	2.92	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Historical
69	Joseph Rosenfeld Way	0080-0012-0000	All	35.39	Fairview Park Forest Revocable Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
69	Joseph Rosenfeld Way	0080-0044-0000	All	1.08	Fairview Park Forest Revocable Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
69	Joseph Rosenfeld Way	0080-0045-0000	All	1.00	Fairview Park Forest Revocable Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest
70	Con Comm Land - Rosenfeld Open Space	0080-0028-0000	All	7.17	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
71	Con Comm Land - Peters River	0088-0011-0000	All	25.86	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
72	Rhodes Estate	0084-0009-0000	All	28.42	Rhodes 1994 Real Estate Trust		Private	M.G.L. Ch. 61	61 - Forest

73	Planning Board Open Space	0089-013C-0000	All	17.00	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
74	Planning Board Open Space	0089-0029-0000	All	5.74	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
75	Con Comm Land - Jenks Reservoir	0092-0022-0000	All	10.75	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
75	Con Comm Land - Jenks Reservoir	0092-0029-0000	All	22.10	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
76	Con Comm Land - Arcand Park	0088-0008-0000	All	112.22	Town of Bellingham Conservation Commission		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
77	DiPietro Elementary School Land	0086-0042-0000	All	63.85	Town of Bellingham School Department		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
78	Planning Board Open Space	0091-0006-000A	All	12.39	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
79	Planning Board Open Space	0091-0006-000B	All	10.66	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
80	Planning Board Open Space	0091-051A-0000	All	9.85	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
81	Saint Jean the Baptist Cemetery	0092-0020-0000	All	63.58	Precious Blood Church		Private Non-Profit	Private	Historical
82	Wilcox Cemetery	0092-0032-0000	All	3.42	Wilcox Cemetery Association		Private Non-Profit	Private	Historical
83	Water Supply Land - Wells #3 & 4	0091-0050-0000	All	26.48	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
84	Planning Board Open Space	0091-0052-0000	All	3.09	Town of Bellingham Planning Board		Municipal	Owned	Conservation
85	Crooks Corner Park	0094-0180-0000	All	0.84	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
86	South Community Center/Fire Station	0094-0192-0000	All	0.35	Town of Bellingham		Municipal	Owned	Recreation
87	Water Supply Land - Well #11	0095-027J-0000	All	12.84	Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works		Municipal	Owned	Water Supply
88	New England Country Club	0095-0037-0000	All	318.52	January Holdings, LLC		Private	Private	Recreation

SECTION 6 – COMMUNITY VISION

6.A Description of Process

Input from town officials and the general public played a vital role in developing the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Both town officials and residents have valuable insights into the town's requirements, challenges, and potential opportunities that must be addressed. Their feedback is essential for setting goals, defining objectives, and ensuring that proposed recommendations are practical and garner enough support for successful implementation.

1. **Public Survey**: The public survey asked 11 questions that required multiple choice, short answer, and extended response answers. Electronic and paper copies were made available at the Fall Town Meeting, the Town Hall, Library, Senior Center, email groups, social media, and the town website. The survey was available for 2 1/2 months. 508 individuals responded. The survey and an analysis of the results can be viewed in the Community Goals section.

2. **Open Space and Recreation Committee**: Bellingham's first Open Space & Recreation Committee began meeting in December 2023. There were 8 primary committee members who met on a monthly basis to discuss Bellingham's open spaces, contribute to the informing and writing of the plan and discussing current and future open space projects.

3. **Public Forum**: On September 18th, 2024, the Open Space and Recreation Committee hosted a Public Forum in the Town Hall from 6:30-8:30 pm. This meeting was held with the intent to give the locals an opportunity to make comments on the Proposed Open Space and Recreation 2024 Action Plan. There was also an online forum option open for 5 weeks for people to comment on.

4. **Interdepartmental Input**: During the month of November, 2024, and October 2025 drafts of the Open Space and Recreation Action Plan was sent out to town boards and departments for comment. Their input was received and implemented into the plan. A draft of the full open space and recreation plan was sent to all town departments in October 2025 as a final effort to encapsulate the town's collected effort to create and achieve Open Space and Recreation Goals.

6.B Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

The overall vision of Bellingham's Open Space focuses around 6 main elements that presented themselves throughout conversations with residents, as part of the public survey, and in conversation with town officials. These goals include increasing accessibility and inclusivity, increasing community involvement, and finding creative ways to communicate with residents. Bellingham is focused on collaborating with town committees, boards and other partners to secure

usable and vulnerable spaces and enhance connectivity throughout Bellingham and work towards establishing a Parks and Recreation Department.

SECTION 7 – ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

This needs analysis section is a compilation of needs derived from several sources. It includes input from the survey, needs identified in the town's 2010 master plan or other documents, the State Division of Conservation Services statewide open space and recreation plan called Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), input from town officials, and the data assembled in the Community Setting, Environmental Inventory and Analysis, and Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest sections of this report.

7.A Summary of Resource Protection Needs

As the Community Setting section made clear, growth is proceeding in Bellingham. In addition to negative impacts on natural resources (wildlife habitat, water recharge areas, etc.), this development has impacted the character of the town by eliminating scenic views and transforming rural roadways into suburban collector roads. The need to conserve natural resources and to preserve community character is evident.

Only approximately 13.9 percent of the Town of Bellingham is held as open space, and 83 percent of respondents in the 2024 OSRP survey responded yes when asked if the town needed more open space.

As noted above, Bellingham has undergone substantial development in recent years. Three major regional shopping centers have been developed at the I-495 and Route 126 intersection, a fourth is planned, two power plants have been built, large industrial and distribution facilities have recently been built and more are in the permitting stage. The rapid population growth slowed between 2010 and 2020. The population increased by 350 between 2010 and 2015, 263 between 2015 and 2020. However, the population is projected to increase by another 750 in 2025, due to a number of large scale housing projects recently approved.

Many of these recent housing projects were offered conditional approvals through the planning board that grant open space in perpetuity. It is important to continue to involve the conservation commission in plans to acquire and protect open space. This includes utilizing smart planning at the planning board level while reviewing plans to continue to acquire and protect more open space while development in town continues.

Since the 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Town has acquired nearly 20 acres of additional open space. Some specific sites suggested to target for future acquisitions include additional land along the Charles River, land adjacent to the Town-owned former railroad right-of-way and land around Beaver Pond.

7.B Summary of Community's Needs

Based on survey results, it was very apparent that community members felt that Bellingham's public areas were not meeting accessibility requirements and could be improved in a way that makes the properties more inviting to a variety of individuals.

One of those accessibility concerns is access to transportation. A major impediment to compact development in suburban regions such as Bellingham is the need to accommodate automobiles and the separation of uses mandated by zoning. Since there is little transit service available in the region, all facilities must be designed to be accessed by automobiles. Similarly, separation of uses requires that all trips be made by automobile since the resulting distances between uses precludes the possibility of walking. This results in wider roads large parking lot, and traffic which in turn renders public transit or pedestrian-oriented development difficult.

The Town's decision to join the Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority in 2007 was an important step towards better community transportation and accessibility. This facilitated connections services for people with disabilities and seniors by using Dial-A-Ride to get free transportation services to places like medical appointments and grocery store trips. They also have a commuter rail service that provides safe, reliable, and affordable transportation for Bellingham residents to the MBTA Forge Park train station in Franklin, MA. However, there is clearly a need for more pedestrian corridors including those to open space and recreation areas.

Based on the local survey conducted for this OSRP, access to open space in the form of parking or more trails for bikes and walking continues to be a priority in the community. When asked what challenges users faced accessing open space 20% of respondents cited the lack of walking or biking access while another 20% cited challenges due to lack of parking. Also when asked what would increase their use of the towns existing open space approximately 55% of respondents cited sidewalk and trail connections.

More effort has recently gone into connecting areas through multi-use trails. Recently a 1.2-mile segment of Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) between Center Street and South Main Street was improved between 2021 and 2023. A significant goal of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council along with the other regional planning councils has been focusing on efforts to connect regional shared use trails. MAPCs 2025-2030 Strategic plan has 5 primary goals, goal 3 of which is to encourage sustainable development and mobility with a focus on affordable homes, good jobs for low-income workers, a healthy environment, and non-auto transportation options throughout the region. This includes opportunities to connect the town of Bellingham to connect the communities to existing greenways, including the Milford Upper Charles Trail, The SNETT trail and Blackstone Valley. This is also in line with results of the latest state SCORP survey (2017). Public officials in the SCORP survey outlined the need to invest more in trails and pedestrian access corresponds with the increase in popularity identified by the survey takers over the past five to 10 years in walking, trails, and hiking by their constituents. Respondents also identified

walking, rail trails, biking, and hiking as the activities they believe will increase in popularity over the next five years. When asked what facilities are not currently available in a community, but should be, trails and bicycling facilities top the list both of public officials and community survey respondents

The Bellingham OSRP survey also revealed that Bellingham residents had fairly diverse requests and priorities regarding open space and recreation in town (See Appendix for survey results). However, what many of these had in common can be attributed to (1) lack of information about or 92) lack of maintenance of existing available recreation opportunities and spaces.

When respondents were asked what challenges were currently stopping them from using the existing open spaces, 29% of respondents cited a lack of information. Improvements to access of information will help respondents utilize the resources that are currently available in town. Many comments included requests for an email subscription, newsletter, or webpage updates to keep them informed.

The OSRP survey and site investigations by Open Space committee members of town recreative areas revealed a number of areas where maintenance or improvement efforts could vastly improve town user experiences. These areas appear to be underutilized due to issues like parking, repairing recreation equipment and fields, or fixing other infrastructure. The town common recreation space was the most highly utilized and complemented in the Bellingham OSRP survey results. Residents have clearly expressed their enthusiasm for this space and would like to see similar improvements in terms of maintenance at other well used recreative spaces.

7.C Management Needs, Potential Change of Use

The Conservation Commission is responsible for the management of the Conservation Land in town, with the help of DPW for some upkeep and management. There are also several aspects in the land management of conservation areas that would benefit from improvement. Creating more maps for existing trail systems on conservation land is a high priority. Through the work of the town’s senior program and other local volunteers the Conservation Commission has begun the process of documenting the existing conditions on conservation owned parcels and identifying where trails may already exist. The town's goal is to expand this work to more interested individuals and offer more group volunteer opportunities. In previous years, resources allowed for a land management intern position to help with the conservation office workload. This is no longer the case due to dwindling budgets, but the Conservation Department hopes to re-fund such a position in the future. To support these increased land management activities, more equipment would also be beneficial, such as a department hand-held GPS unit and mapping program to help with mapping and trail construction.

According to the survey results, there is a clear interest from individual residents or organizations that would like more opportunities to be involved in or take responsibility for improving the quality of and increasing stewardship of Bellingham’s open space. The majority of the Bellingham Conservation Commission’s time is spent on the protection of wetland resource areas leaving

less time for long-term open space planning, open space improvement projects and open space monitoring efforts. These efforts could be supported by establishing the Open Space committee as a standing committee that assists the Commission in these efforts, identifies funding opportunities, strengthens community involvement through town-led events, and promotes outdoor activities and environmental stewardship. Suggestions for these events includes expanded Earth Day events, community clean ups, hosting regional sport tournaments, and local festivals which the Open Space Committee could coordinate or assist with.

The town has also identified a need to revitalize and expand the town's Parks and Recreation Department. Currently the Parks Department, under the leadership of the Department of Public Works, is limited to two full-time staffers and seasonal summer hires that perform regular maintenance on a number of town owned properties. The Parks Department, DPW and School Department coordinates maintenance of the town's parks, playgrounds, athletic field, school grounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, and other outdoor recreation facilities. There are not sufficient personnel, resources or organizational structure to maintain these areas and pursue upgrades to town facilities. There is clearly a need for a more sustainable plan for implementing regular upkeep and maintenance of these areas. The Parks Committee is currently comprised of 3 committee members who maintain the towns field schedule and pursue additional recreation projects. This committee would ideally support additional programming in the future. However, they lack the staffing and resources necessary to expand these efforts. Management of these priorities could be transferred to a revitalized Parks and Recreation Department.

SECTION 8 – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In response to community feedback the committee established the Five Pillars as guiding principals for the goals and objectives for open space and recreation in town:

- **Identify and Define**: Uncover the potential of each open space parcel and clearly define its use for the public.
- **Repair**: Increase safety and inclusivity by fixing existing features
- **Maintain**: Build a sustainable foundation for the systems already in place.
- **Enhance**: Implement projects to meet future public needs.
- **Share**: Utilize multiple outreach methods to keep the community informed.

These pillars are interconnected and explored further below in relation to resource protection needs, community needs and management needs.

Goal 1: Protect Existing Open space and more responsibly acquire new parcels

Objective 1: Identify and define open space in town

Objective 2: Protect Existing Open Space

Objective 3: Remove Non-essential dams and other aquatic barriers

Objective 4: Use Planning Tools to acquire additional Open Space

Objective 5: Acquire additional properties of local importance

Goal 2: Repair existing and well used recreation spaces in town

Objective 1: Repair existing infrastructure

Goal 3: Maintain existing open space and recreation sites

Objective 1: Identify Departments responsible for operation and maintenance at each recreation site

Objective 2: Transition the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee towards a standing Open Space Committee

Objective 3: Create Operation and Maintenance Plans for well used recreational sites in town to ensure a regular maintenance schedule with responsible parties

Goal 4: Enhance existing facilities to better suit resident needs.

Objective 1: Improve Disability Accessible Parking

Objective 2: Evaluate Clara Macy Playground for a potential skate park location

Objective 3: Expand opportunities at the Town Common such as a community garden, water play area, picnic tables

Objective 4: Improve facilities available at Stall Brook Elementary school

Objective 5: Improve facilities at Dipietro (south Primevera) schools

Objective 6: Add picnic Tables to Arcand Park/ Jenks Reservoir

Objective 7: Improve facilities at Silver Lake

Objective 8: Improve facilities at North Bellingham fields

Objective 9: Improve facilities at High Street fields

Objective 10: Create a walking path at Bellingham Memorial Middle School

Objective 11: Improve facilities at Blackstone Street Fields

Objective 12: Improve facilities at the Bellingham Highschool

Objective 13: Establish canoe launch on Charles River

Goal 5: Improve access to and communication about open space

Objective 1: Update Google Maps for town owned conservation and recreation parcels.

Objective 2: Add information on town owned open space and recreation parcels to the town website.

Objective 3: Update signage to town owned open space and recreation parcels.

Goal 6: Create new partnerships and further develop existing partnerships dedicated towards protection of open space

Objective 1: Establish a relationship between the Open Space Committee, the Cemetery Committee and Historical Commission. Determine how they can support one another

Objective 2: Further develop relationships with surrounding conservation groups including Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, MACC, CRWA, and MAPC

Objective 3: Expand Open Space Volunteer Opportunities

Goal 7: Create a Parks and Recreation (P&R) Department

Objective 1: Identify the legal avenue for creating a Parks and Recreation Department

Objective 2: Propose a clear structure and responsibilities for the P&R Department

Objective 3: Develop a budget for the P&R Department

Objective 4: Provide summer programming

Goal 8: Increase Pathways and Connectivity in Bellingham

Objective 1: Improve trail access

Objective 2: Increase sidewalk accessibility

SECTION 9 – 7 YEAR ACTION PLAN

The table in this section describes the Goals Objectives and Actions identified by the Open Space committee in response to the town needs identified from the community vision section and analysis of needs.

Timeline:

- **Ongoing:** Currently in action or a continuous process
- **Short term**: 0-3 years
- **Medium term**: 3-7 years
- **Long Term**: 7+ years

Responsible Entity Acronyms:

- **OSC**: Open Space Committee
- **Select**: Select Board
- **PC**: Parks Commission
- **SB**: School Board
- **PB**: Planning Board
- **BOH**: Board of Health
- **ConCom**: Conservation Commission
- **DPW**: Department of Public Works
- **IT**: Information Technology Department
- **Historical**: Historical commission
- **Finance**: Finance committee
- **ZBRC**: Zoning Bylaw Review Committee
- **Cemetery**: Cemetery Committee

Potential Funding Acronyms:

- **LAND Grant:** Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Grant Program
- **CRWA:** Charles River Watershed Association
- **DER:** Division of Ecological Restoration
- **ODS Grants:** Office of Dam Safety
- **PARC:** Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities Grant Program
- **SRTS:** Massachusetts Safe Routes to School Program

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Goal 1	**Protect existing open space and more responsibly acquire new parcels**			
Objective 1	Identify and define open space in town	Ongoing	OSC, DPW, IT,PC, ConCom	Staff time, Volunteer time
Action 1	Update Assessor's Data	Med Term	ConCom, DPW	Staff time
Action 2	Fill out an annual parcel assessment for important recreation locations in town	Ongoing	OSC	Staff time, Volunteer time
Action 3	Add a report concern form on the town website	Short Term	IT, DPW, P&R, ConCom	Staff time
Action 4	Conduct Baseline Documentation Surveys on parcels without them and identify conservation and recreation goals	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC	Staff time, Volunteer time
Objective 2	Protect Existing Open Space	Ongoing	ConCom	Staff Time, Volunteer Time, General Fund
Action 1	Clean up polluted habitats on Conservation Commission parcels	Ongoing	ConCom, DPW	Staff Time, Volunteer time
Action 2	Create an O&M plan to support habitat resiliency and biodiversity	Long Term	ConCom	Staff Time, Volunteer time
Action 2	Survey conservation land with suspected encroaching abutters	Long Term	ConCom	Staff Time, Volunteer Time, General Fund

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 3	Research and create database of all Conservation Restrictions, deed restricted lands, grants received and conduct inspections	Ongoing	ConCom, Volunteers	Staff Time, Volunteer Time
Objective 3	Remove Non-essential dams and other aquatic barriers	Long Term	ConCom, Select, DPW	CRWA assistance, DER and ODS Grants
Action 1	Remove the North Bellingham Dam	Long Term	ConCom, Select, DPW	CRWA assistance, DER and ODS Grants
Action 2	Identify other potential dams in town that would benefit from removal	Long Term	ConCom	CRWA
Objective 4	Use Planning Tools to acquire additional Open Space	Ongoing	Planning Board, ConCom	N/A
Action 1	Educating town boards and employees what makes a space an ideal candidate for public space or for environmental protection	Ongoing	Planning Board, ConCom	N/A
Action 2	Review and Amend Measures To Encourage Compact Development Proposed revisit of bylaws and master plan before 2027/28 review	Ongoing	Select, Planning Board	N/A
Objective 5	Acquire additional properties	Long Term	Select, ConCom	LAND grant, The Conservation Land Tax Credit program, Landscape Partnership Grant Program

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 1	Acquire/ protect land near Beaver Pond	Long Term	Select, ConCom	LAND grant, The Conservation Land Tax Credit program, Landscape Partnership Grant Program
Action 2	Acquire/protect land in Blackstone Street/South Maple St./Silver Lake Area	Long Term	Select, ConCom	LAND grant, The Conservation Land Tax Credit program, Landscape Partnership Grant Program
Action 3	Identify additional open space to prioritize for acquisitions	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC	Staff Time, Volunteer time
Goal 2	**Repair existing and well used recreation spaces in town**			
Objective 1	Repair existing infrastructure	Long Term		
Action 1	Fix fencing at Clara Macy Playground	Short Term	DPW, PC	Staff Time, General Fund, Bonds
Action 2	Fix fencing at Crooks Corner	Short Term	DPW, PC	Staff Time, General Fund, Bonds
Action 3	Repair/replace courts and athletic fields at Stall Brook Elementary School	Long Term	SB	Donations, General Fund, Bonds
Action 4	Replace benches at Stall Brook Elementary School	Medium Term	SB	General Fund, Bonds

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 5	Repair/replace benches, fencing, playground, basketball hoops at Dipietro (South Primavera) Schools)	Long Term	SB, DPW	General Fund, Bonds
Action 6	Fix water fountain at Dipietro (South Primavera) Schools)	Medium Term	SB, DPW	General Fund
Action 7	Clean up trash at Arcand Park/ Jenks Reservoir	Short Term	ConCom, BOH, DPW, PC, OSC	General Fund, Volunteer time
Action 8	Fix cracked sidewalks at Silver Lake	Medium Term	DPW, PC	General Fund
Action 9	Remove or repair Kickball Wall and broken fencing at North Bellingham Fields	Short Term	DPW, PC	General Fund
Action 10	New Nets for all goals at North Bellingham Fields	Short Term	PC, DPW	Town athletics user groups, Bonds
Action 11	Repair/replace basketball courts at North Bellingham Fields	Medium Term	PC, DPW	PARC, Land Conservation Assistance Grant Program, General Fund
Action 12	Repair the parking and drainage at North Bellingham Fields	Medium Term	DPW	PARC, Land Conservation Assistance Grant Program, General Fund
Action 13	Fix parking lot edging at Bellingham Memorial Middle School	Medium Term	SB	General Fund

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 14	Dispose of broken goal frames at Bellingham Memorial Middle School	Short Term	PC, DPW	General Fund
Action 15	Repair or replace benches at Blackstone Street Fields	Short Term	PC, DPW	Municipal Budget, PARC, Land Conservation Assistance Grant Program
Goal 3	**Maintain existing open space and recreation sites**			
Objective 1	Identify Departments responsible for operation and maintenance at each recreation site	Medium Term	Town Administrator, DPW, SB, Select, ConCom, PC	
Action 1	Create a "Master Document" describing which Department is responsible for regular maintenance at each property	Medium Term	Town Administrator, DPW, SB, Select, ConCom, PC	
Objective 2	Transition the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee towards a standing Open Space Committee	Short Term	ConCom, Select	
Action 1	Charge and confirmation of the Open Space Committee by the Select Board	Ongoing	ConCom, Select	
Action 2	Appoint resident members and vote on officer positions (chair, co/chairs, secretary)	Ongoing	ConCom, Select	

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 3	Use the annual parcel assessments and other outreach to track OSRP goals	Ongoing	OSC	
Action 4	Create plans, identify funding sources and vote to send proposals and make recommendations to the Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Select Board about implementing Committee proposals	Ongoing	OSC	
Action 5	Create the next OSRP in 7 years	Long Term	OSC, ConCom, Select	
Objective 3	Create Operation and Maintenance Plans for well used recreational sites in town to ensure a regular maintenance schedule with responsible parties	Medium Term	Board of Town Common Trustees, PC, Select, DPW, SB, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund
Action 1	O&M plan for landscaping, playground, and trash at Town Commons	Medium Term	Board of Town Common Trustees, PC, DPW	Staff time, General fund
Action 2	O&M plan for landscaping, playground, courts, and trash at Stall Brook Elementary School	Medium Term	DPW, PC	Staff time, General fund
Action 3	O&M plan for landscaping (athletic field lines) at Dipietro (South/Primavera) Schools	Medium Term	DPW, SB, PC, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 4	O&M plan for water quality and trash at Arcand Park/Jenks Reservoir	Ongoing	ConCom, BOH,PC, DPW	Staff time, General fund
Action 5	Regulations for recreational activities at Arcand Park/Jenks Reservoir	Medium Term	ConCom, DPW, PC	Staff time, General fund
Action 6	O&M plan for water quality, shoreline and trash at Silver Lake	Ongoing	ConCom, BOH, PC, DPW	Staff time, General fund
Action 7	O&M plan for landscaping (athletic field lines) at North Bellingham fields	Medium Term	DPW, PC, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund
Action 8	O&M plan for landscaping (athletic field lines) at High Street Fields	Medium Term	DPW, PC, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund
Action 9	O&M plan for landscaping, playground, athletic fields, and courts at Bellingham Memorial Middle School	Medium Term	DPW, SB, PC, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund
Action 10	O&M plan for landscaping (athletic field lines) at Blackstone Street Fields	Medium Term	DPW, SB, PC, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund
Action 11	O&M plan for landscaping (athletic field lines), turf field, and bathrooms at Bellingham High School	Medium Term	DPW, SB, PC, Town athletics user groups	Staff time, General fund
Goal 4	**Enhance existing facilities to better suit residents needs.**			
Objective 1	Improve Disability Accessible Parking	Short Term	Select, DPW	General Fund

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 1	Improve and add additional accessible parking spots at Clara Macy Playground	Short Term	Select, DPW	General Fund
Action 2	Increase disability access spots at the Bellingham High School	Short Term	Select, DPW	General Fund
Objective 2	Evaluate Clara Macy Playground for a potential skate park location	Long Term	Select, PC	General Fund, PARC
Objective 3	Expand opportunities at the Town Common such as a community garden, water play area, picnic tables	Long Term	Select, Board of Town Common Trustees,	General Fund, PARC
Objective 4	Improve facilities available at Stall Brook Elementary school	Long Term	PC, DPW	
Action 1	Repair existing tennis courts and fencing. Add pickleball lines	Medium term	PC, DPW	General Fund
Action 2	Add bathrooms	Long term	PC, DPW	General Fund
Action 3	Cleanup and turn existing baseball field into a multipurpose field	Short term	PC, DPW	General Fund
Objective 5	Improve facilities at Dipietro (South Primevera) schools	Long term	SB, PC, DPW	General Fund
Action 1	Add Trash bins on SNETT access trail	Medium term	PC, DPW	General Fund, Staff time
Action 2	More parking and lights	Long term	DPW, SB, PC	General Fund

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Objective 6	Add additional picnic tables to Arcand Park/ Jenks Reservoir	Medium term	ConCom	Donations
Objective 7	Improve facilities at Silver Lake	Long term		
Action 1	Build Restrooms	Long term	DPW, BOH	
Action 2	Add Surveillance	Long term	PC, Police	
Objective 8	Improve facilities at North Bellingham fields	Long term		PARC
Action 1	Add walking trail	Medium term	PC, ConCom, DPW	PARC
Action 2	Add Field lights	Long Term	PC, DPW	PARC
Action 3	Increased surveillance and signage	Long Term	Police, PC	General Fund
Objective 9	Improve facilities at High Street fields	Long Term	DPW, PC, Police	PARC
Action 1	Add electric scoreboard	Long Term	PC, Town Athletic User Groups	
Action 2	Increased surveillance	Long Term	Police, PC	
Action 3	Add batting cages	Long Term	DPW, PC	
Objective 10	Create a walking path at Bellingham Memorial Middle School	Short Term	PC, SB	General Fund
Objective 11	Improve facilities at Blackstone Street Fields	Long Term	DPW, Police, BOH, SB	General Fund
Action 1	Add Field Lights	Long Term	PC, DPW	General Fund

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 2	Increase surveillance and signage	Long Term	PC, DPW, Police	
Action 3	Add restrooms	Long Term	PC, DPW, BOH	General Fund
Objective 12	Improve facilities at the Bellingham Highschool	Medium Term	SB, DPW, Parks Committee	General Fund
Action 1	Beautify around the turf and fix drainage	Short Term	SB, PC, DPW	General Fund
Action 2	Paving the gravel path	Medium Term	SB, PC, DPW	General Fund
Action 3	Prepare for future turf field and track replacements, set up a stabilization account	Medium Term	SB, Select	General Fund
Objective 13	Establish canoe launch on Charles River	Long Term	ConCom, Select, PC	CRWA, General Funds, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program
Goal 5	**Improve access to and communication about open space**			
Objective 1	Update Google Maps for town owned conservation and recreation parcels	Ongoing	ConCom, IT	Staff Time
Objective 2	Add information on town owned open space and recreation parcels to the town website	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC	Staff and Volunteer Time
Action 1	Update the town open space website	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC	Staff Time
Action 2	Create a town webpage on town trails	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC	Staff Time

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 3	Make the OSRP into a more accessible website to promote accessibility and use	Short term	ConCom, OSC	Staff and Volunteer Time, Staff Time
Objective 3	Update signage to town owned open space, recreation parcels, and trails	Medium Term	ConCom, PC, Historical	General Fund, Donations
Action 1	Add signage at North Bellingham Fields	Short Term	ConCom, PC	General Fund, Donations
Action 2	Add signage at High Street Fields	Short Term	ConCom, PC	General Fund, Donations
Action 3	Add signage and storyboards for historical significance at Silver Lake	Medium Term	PC, Historical, ConCom	General Fund, Staff Time
Action 3	Add signage at Clara Macy	Medium Term	PC	General Fund
Action 4	Identify locations for adding trails and signage at conservation parcels	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC, PC	General Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program
Goal 6	**Create new partnerships and further develop existing partnerships dedicated towards protection of open space**			
Objective 1	Establish a relationship between the Open Space Committee, the Cemetery Committee and Historical Commission. Determine how they can support one another	Short Term	ConCom, OSC, Cemetery, Historical	Staff and Volunteer Time

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Objective 2	Further develop relationships with surrounding conservation groups including Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee, Scouting of America, Girl Scouts of America, MACC, CRWA, and MAPC	Ongoing	ConCom, OSC, PC	Staff and Volunteer Time
Objective 3	Expand Open Space Volunteer Opportunities	Ongoing	BOH, ConCom, OSC, PC	Staff and Volunteer Time
Action 1	Expand existing Earth Day activities, including open space cleanups	Ongoing	BOH, ConCom, OSC, PC	Staff and Volunteer time
Action 2	Add bat boxes, bird houses, etc. to encourage biodiversity in conservation parcels	Longterm	ConCom, Scouting organizations	Donations
Goal 7	**Create a Parks and Recreation Department**			
Objective 1	Identify the legal avenue for creating a Parks and Recreation Department and rolling the existing parks commission to oversee the new department	Long term	Town Administrator, Select, PC	
Objective 2	Propose a clear structure and responsibilities for the P&R Department	Long term	Town Administrator, Select, PC, DPW	
Action 1	Clearly delineate activities which would fall under P&R as opposed to DPW or the SB	Long term	Town Administrator, Select, PC, DPW, SB	

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 2	Identify priority projects, responsibilities and programs for P&R	Long term	Town Administrator, Select, PC, DPW, SB	
Objective 3	Develop a budget for the P&R Department	Long term	Select, Finance, PC	
Action 1	Identify staffing needs for the Department (ex rec director and seasonal help)	Long term	Select, Finance, PC	
Action 2	Identify costs associated with priority projects, responsibilities and programs for the Department	Long term	Select, Finance, PC	
Objective 4	Provide summer programming	Long term	Select, PC	
Action 1	Creating Leagues and running camps	Long term	PC	
Goal 8	**Increase Pathways and Connectivity in Bellingham**			
Objective 1	Improve trail access	Ongoing	ConCom, PC	General Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program
Action 1	Identify existing trails within town owned open space	Ongoing	ConCom, PC	General Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program
Action 2	Prioritize trails for improvement	Medium term	ConCom, PC	General Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program

Goal, Objective or Action	Description	Timeline	Responsible Entity	Potential Funding
Action 3	Create and distribute mapping of trails	Ongoing	ConCom, PC, OSC	Staff time, Volunteers
Action 4	Obtain a gps unit	Medium Term	ConCom, DPW	General Fund
Action 5	Increase signage	Ongoing	ConCom, PC	General Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program
Action 6	Identify and prioritize areas for acquisition of and or rights for trail connectivity development.	Long term	ConCom, PC, OSC, PB	
Objective 2	Increase sidewalk accessibility	Long term	Select, PB, DPW, ZBRC	SRTS
Action 1	Identify and prioritize areas where sidewalks would be most useful	Long term	Select, PB, DPW, ZBRC	SRTS

Town of Bellingham Open Space and Recreation Plan

Prepared: 11/03/2024

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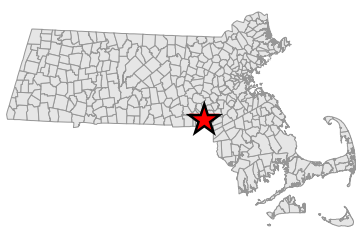
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Map No. 10

Action Plan

Legend

- Town of Bellingham
- Town Lines
- State Line
- Interstate Route
- State Route
- Local Street
- Gravel Pits
- Easements
- Landscape/Undeveloped
- Wetlands / Deep Marsh
- Water Bodies
- Landfills
- Open Space



Bellingham, MA

Statewide datalayers used in preparation of this plan are maintained by the Massachusetts Bureau of Geographic Information (MassGIS). Town-specific datalayers used in preparation of this plan are maintained by the Town of Bellingham.

While the Town has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this document at the time it was prepared, this document is provided for convenience and informational purposes only and may contain outdated or inaccurate data. The Town of Bellingham makes no claims, no representations, and no warranties, express or implied, concerning the validity (express or implied), the reliability, or the accuracy of the information provided herein, including the implied validity of the uses of such data.

PUBLIC COMMENT LETTERS

Selectboard

Conservation Commission

Parks Commission

Planning Board

Regional planning agency

SECTION 10 – REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

DCS approval letter

ADA ACCESS SELF EVALUATION

Survey Results Data

Insert Approval letter from DCS once sent to and approved of by DCS

ADA SELF EVALUATION

Introduction

The ADA Self Access Evaluation is “a detailed assessment of the recreation department and conservation commission [that]… includes a site-by-site inventory of all recreation and conservation areas and buildings, programs or services and a transition plan if any changes are necessary to make these public facilities, programs, or services accessible. The Assessment should ensure compliance with Federal anti-discrimination regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as Amended (“ADA”).

The requirements of the ADA are administered in Massachusetts by the Architectural Access Board (“AAB”), as set forth in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (521 CMR 19:00). The purpose of the ADA requirements is to “seek to create or adapt sites, buildings and facilities so that they can be approached, entered, and used by persons with disabilities.” For the purpose of an OSRP, public recreational and conservation facilities must be evaluated for compliance with the ADA in accordance with the Code of Massachusetts Regulations. It should be noted, however, that the DCS Workbook emphasizes the creation of an accessible system of facilities rather than an inventory of facilities in which every site is fully accessible.

Part I: Administrative Requirements

1. Designation of an ADA Coordinator

   The ADA Coordinator for the Town of Bellingham is its Town Administrator:
   Joeseph Laydon
   10 Mechanic Street Bellingham, MA 02019
   508-657-2801
   jlaydon@bellinghamma.org

2. Grievance Procedures

The following ADA Compliance Policy is in place for the public to follow in the event that a complaint must be made in connection with accessibility of conservation or recreation facilities:

EQUAL ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES
Maximum opportunity will be made available to receive citizen comments, complaints, and/or to resolve grievances or inquiries.

STEP 1: The Town Administrator will be available to meet with citizens and employees during business hours. When a complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification is received either in writing or through a meeting or telephone call, every effort will be made to create a record regarding the name, address, and telephone number of the person making the complaint, grievance, program policy interpretation or clarification. If the person desires to remain anonymous, he or she may. A complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification will be responded to within ten working days (if the person making the complaint is identified) in a format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient, (i.e. verbally, enlarged type face, etc.). Copies of the complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification and response will be forwarded to the appropriate town agency (i.e. park commission, conservation commission). If the grievance is not resolved at this level it will be progressed to the next level.

STEP 2: A written grievance will be submitted to the Town Administrator. Assistance in writing the grievance will be available to all individuals. All written grievances will be responded to within ten working days by the Town Administrator in a format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient, (i.e. verbally, enlarged type face, etc.). If the grievance is not resolved at this level it will be progressed to the next level.

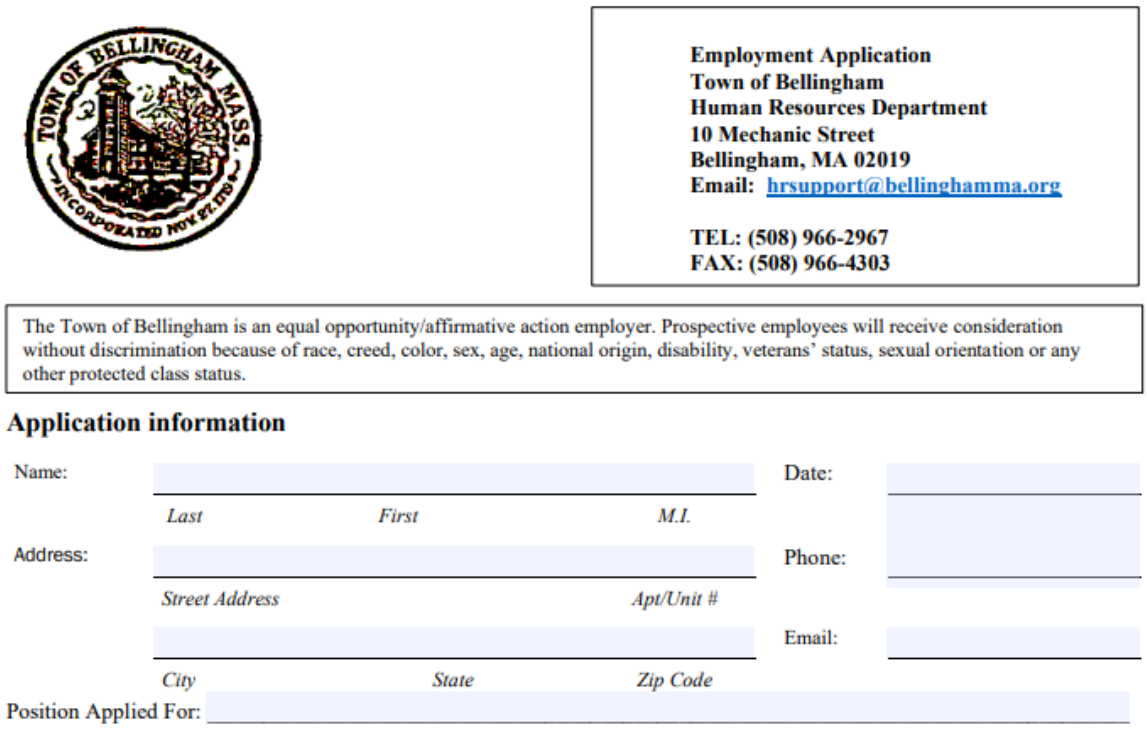
STEP 3: If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, citizens will be informed of the opportunity to meet 73 and speak with the Board of Selectmen, with whom local authority for final grievance resolution lies. Public Notification Notices in large print are posted in Town Hall indicating that the Town of Bellingham does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The Town’s standard employment application includes a non-discrimination statement (see attached) and is posted on the Town’s web site.

3. Public Notification Requirements

Notices in large print are posted in Town Hall indicating that the Town of Bellingham does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The Town's standard employment application includes a non-discrimination statement and is posted on its web site. The following notice informs employees and the public that the Town of Bellingham does not discriminate on the basis of disability:

> "*The Town of Bellingham does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, national origin or homelessness in any phase of the employment process from the initial application for employment, up to and including the retention, promotion, termination/discharge of employees from the Town of Bellingham*."

A copy of a portion of the first page of the Town's application for employment is presented below:



Employment Application
Town of Bellingham
Human Resources Department
10 Mechanic Street
Bellingham, MA 02019
Email: hrsupport@bellinghamma.org

TEL: (508) 966-2967
FAX: (508) 966-4303

The Town of Bellingham is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Prospective employees will receive consideration without discrimination because of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, veterans' status, sexual orientation or any other protected class status.

Application information

Name: _____ Date: _____
Last *First* *M.I.*

Address: _____ Phone: _____
Street Address *Apt/Unit #*

_____ Email: _____
City *State* *Zip Code*

Position Applied For: _____

4. Participation of Individuals with Disabilities or Organizations Representing the Disabled Community

   Achieved through the survey of residents' opinions and preferences and the ADA Coordinator

Part II: Program Accessibility

The DCS Workbook calls for an inventory and a future transition plan that includes the buildings, recreation facilities and equipment (swimming areas, tot lots, etc.), programs, and services under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission or Recreation Department, including lessees or concessionaires. The inventory is an analysis of the existing conditions at conservation and recreation sites for compliance with the AAB regulations, while the transition plan identifies a path towards improved accessibility and ADA compliance.

Facility Inventory:
There are seven sites in the Town of Bellingham that are under the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission or Conservation Commission and include the requisite facilities to require study for ADA compliance. Six of the seven are under the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission and Arcand Park is under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission. The sites offer a variety of opportunities for public use, however, their most frequently-reviewed facilities were recreation facilities, parking, ramps, site access/path of travel/entrances, rest rooms, and picnicking areas:

1. Recreation Facilities

   Recreation facilities in Bellingham include beach areas, picnic sites, trails, tot lots, and playing fields and courts. The facilities were reviewed for their proximity to accessible paths and their compliance with accessibility requirements set forth by the AAB. Common requirements include accessible dimensions and features on equipment, proper signage including for the visually impaired, and accompanying programs and services that provide opportunities to the disabled community.

2. Parking

   Any public recreation or conservation site with designated off-street parking shall comply with the parking and passenger loading zone provisions set forth in 521 CMR 23.00 ("the Parking Requirements"). The Parking Requirements set forth a minimum number of accessible spaces that must be provided according to the number of total spaces available in the lot, as follows:

Total Spaces In Lot	Required Minimum Number of Accessible Spaces
15-25	1
26-50	2
51-75	3
76-100	4
101-150	5
151-200	6
201-300	7
301-400	8
401-500	9
501-1,000	2% of total
1,001+	20 plus 1 for each 100 over 1000

Source: 521 CMR 23.2.1

Furthermore, one in every eight accessible spaces, but not less than one space, shall be van accessible.[3] Van accessible spaces must provide a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet, two inches at the parking space and along at least one vehicle access route to such spaces from site entrances and exits. The space shall also have a minimum dimension of eight feet in width, as well as an eight foot wide adjacent access aisle, and be marked by a sign designating it as “Van Accessible”.[4] Alternatively, the van requirement may be satisfied by having all handicapped spaces eleven or more feet wide.[5]

3. Ramps

   For the purposes of ADA compliance, any part of an accessible route with a slope greater than 5% shall be considered a ramp.[6] Ramp designation triggers slope, rise, width, and landing requirements as well as gripping requirements on rails and surfaces. Site Access, Path of Travel and Entrances. Any accessible route shall provide a continuous unobstructed path connecting accessible spaces and elements inside and outside a facility.[7] The route must adhere to width, turning radius, passing space, and slope requirements. Furthermore, an accessible route may also be designated as a walkway, giving rise to further requirements set forth in 521 CMR 22:00.

[3] 521 CMR 23.2.2
[4] 521 CMR 23.4.7
[5] 521 CMR 23.4.7
[6] 521 CMR 24:00
[7] 521 CMR 20.1

4. Rest Rooms
   None of the facilities within the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission or Conservation Commission include permanent public toilet rooms. However, the beach facilities at Silver Lake and Arcand Park do provide portable toilets during the summer. Other sites also use portable toilets as needed. Those toilets are subject to accessibility standards set forth in 521 CMR 30.1.2 but were not available for review at the time of this report.

5. Picnicking
   Picnic areas are regulated under recreational facilities in 521 CMR 19.6. The regulations require that picnic facilities be accessible from an accessible route that is paved or hard packed.[8] Additionally, 5% of tables provided at a site shall comply with 521 CMR 19.5.2, which sets forth dimensional requirements for accessible tables.

The following Facility Inventory is a comprehensive accessibility evaluation of all sites in the Town of Bellingham under the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission or Conservation Commission with public facilities. It should be noted that, except those listed here, the conservation lands under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission have no parking or facilities of any kind so no accessibility evaluation has been done for those sites:

[8] 521 CMR 19.6.1

DiPietro / South Primavera School Field Complex



Address: Harpin Street
Parcel No.: 0086-0042-0000
Acreage: 4.81
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission
Facilities: 5 Fields, batting cages, Playground areas, SNETT trail access
This facility includes multiple fields and playground areas north and south of Harpin Road. Access to the north side fields is accessible via marked handicapped spaces, however there is no marked path of travel available to the south side fields that does not consist of stairs. There are also multiple small playground areas including swings and some picnic tables. The SNETT multiuse paved trail is accessible via sidewalks and curb cuts from the handicapped spaces near field C.

DIPIETRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL *ALSO REFERRED TO AS SOUTH/PRIMAVERA SCHOOLS*			
Parking		#	
	Total Spaces	~100	school and field lots
	Required Handicapped Spaces	5	
	Total Handicapped Spaces	4/5	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes	No handicapped spaces or parking lines in Field D lot
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	Yes/No	5 ft access aisle at 2 spots near field C. Access aisle not present at 3 other handicapped spots
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	No marked van spaced
	Sign with international symbl of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	Yes	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	Yes	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	No	
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	Yes	
Ramps		Yes	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	Yes	
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	Yes	

	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	No	
	No ponding of water	No ponding	
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	Yes/No	Stairs required to access Field E from across Harpin St
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	Yes	
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	Yes	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	No	Bottom of stairs is grass

North Field



Address: Hartford Avenue
Parcel No.: 0009-0025-0000
Acreage: 4.81
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission
Facilities: Soccer field, basketball court
This facility includes a basketball court with a backstop wall and some extra field space with soccer goals set up. An unmarked parking lot with no designated handicapped spaces provides access to the site. Most of the lot is paved with asphalt but its condition is deteriorating as well as the asphalt on the basketball court. The rest is loosely packed gravel. There are no pathways or ramps at the park to access either the court or the fields from the parking lot. There is a small deteriorating bleacher area which is not accessible.

NORTH FIELDS			
Parking		#	
	Total Spaces	~20	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	1	
	Total Handicapped Spaces	0	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	No	
	Drop off area is provided within 100 feet	No	
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	No	
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	No marked van spaced
	Sign with international symbol of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	No	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	No	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	No	
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	No	No curbs
Ramps		No	No ramps
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	No	No path of travel

	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	No	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	No	Cracked pavement
	No ponding of water	Yes	Ponding present
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	No	No path
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	No	
	3ft. Wide min.	No	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	No	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	No	

Stallbrook School Field



Address: Hartford Avenue
Parcel No.: 0013-010C-0000
Acreage: 27.029
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission
Facilities: Baseball field, bleachers, playground, basketball court

This facility includes a small baseball field with a set of bleachers, a mulched playground area with swings a climbing structure and some chi-up bars, as well as a basketball court. The pavement in the parking area is in good condition as well as the basketball court with minimal cracking. There are no pathways or ramps at the park to access either the court, fields, or playground from the parking lot but the parking lot itself does provide accessible smooth pavement into the basketball court. There is a small weather but good condition bleacher area which is not accessible

STALL BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL			
Parking		#	
	Total Spaces	71+	71 Spaces in back lot adjacent to field, playground + court (not including plenty of additional parking at front of school)
	Total Handicapped Spaces	2	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	4	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes/No	2 handicapped spaces located next to playground and basketball court entrance. Closest spots to baseball field entrance ARE NOT handicapped
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	Yes	
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	Yes	
	Sign with international symbol of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	No	Parking spaces and painted handicapped signs on pavement overlap with additional children's recess painted lines (hop scotch, etc)
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	NA	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	Yes	
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	Yes	
Ramps		No	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance		Basketball court and playground viewing area are handicapped accessible. Baseball field does not contain handicapped ramps, handicapped parking spaces, or curb cut
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	Yes	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	

	No ponding of water	No water	
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	Yes/No	Stairs not required to access basketball court or playground. Stairs or ramp needed to access baseball field bleachers
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	Yes/No	Yes for courts and playground. No for baseball field
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	Yes/No	Yes for courts and playground. No for baseball field
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	Yes/No	Yes for courts and playground. No for baseball field

Clara Macy Playground and Field



Address: Monique Drive
Parcel No.: 0029-0108-0000
Acreage: 11.13
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission
Facilities: Playground, baseball field, benches, picnic tables

This facility includes a jungle gym and swing set in the playground and a baseball field. An unmarked parking lot with no designated handicapped spaces provides access to the site but there is no paved path of travel to the interior of the site from the parking lot. The lot is paved with good condition asphalt. There are no pathways or ramps at the park to access either the court or the fields from the parking lot. There is a small deteriorating bleacher area which is not accessible. There are also some benches scattered around the playground and two inaccessible octagonal picnic tables.

CLARA MACY FIELDS AND PLAYGROUND			
Parking		#	
	Total Spaces	~10	No parking lines in small, recently-paved lot
	Total Handicapped Spaces	0	No handicapped spot or signs
	Required Handicapped Spaces	0	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	No	
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	No	
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	
	Sign with international symbl of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	No	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	No	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	Yes	Parking lot in perfect condition. No handicapped curb access, ramp, or sidewalk that makes field or playground accessible
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	No	
Ramps		**No**	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	No	Mostly flat to access playground from parking lot. But no handicapped-accessible paved path exists
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	No	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	

	No ponding of water	No ponding	
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	No stairs needed	
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	No	
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	Yes	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	No	

Crooks Corner



Location: Crooks Corner (Pulaski Boulevard/South Main Street)
Parcel No.: 0094-0180-000
Acreage: 0.86
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission
Facilities: Gazebo, pathways, benches Crooks Corner Common is a small passive recreation area with no parking lot. It has a small gazebo, a flagpole and a grassy area. The gazebo is accessible by a three-foot-wide concrete path running from Pulaski Blvd to South Main St through the center of Crooks Corner Common. The path goes straight through the gazebo in the center of the park. It is not interrupted by any steps or ramps, so the interior of the gazebo is easily accessible by wheelchair. The pathway is accessible by the sidewalk which runs adjacent to the park. The flagpole is not accessible by a path.

CROOK'S CORNER			
Parking		#	
	Total Spaces	0	No public parking access for Crook's Corner. Nearest parking at private shopping centers (CVS parking lot signs state 'parking for customer use only')
	Total Handicapped Spaces	0	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	0	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	NA	Outside of no available parking, Crook's corner is fully handicapped accessible. Gazibo, benches, trash cans, and little free library are all handicapped acessible from sidewalks that are flush and level with paved path that disects the park
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	NA	
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	NA	
	Sign with international symbl of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	NA	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	NA	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	NA	No parking
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	NA	No parking
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	NA	
Ramps		**No**	

Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	Yes	Crosswalks with crosswalk buttons connect adjacent road sidwalks to handicapped-accessible path that runs through the Center of Crook's corner to the Gazibo
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	Yes	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	
	No ponding of water	No ponding of water	
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	No stairs needed	
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	Yes	
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	Yes	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	Yes	

Silver Lake



Location: Lake Street
Parcel No.: 0072-0025-000
Acreage: 57.36
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission/ Conservation Commission
Facilities: Beach, playground, grills, picnic tables, parking lot Silver lake includes a beach area, a new playground and four freestanding grills. It is accessed by an unmarked parking lot that can hold 25-50 cars. There are four designated handicapped spaces. There are no pathways, rails or ramps from the parking lot to any of the facilities. However, the new playground has a paved, handicapped accessible path around it. Portable toilets are provided during the season. There are also four picnic tables with no paths leading to them, and four freestanding grills. There is an additional freestanding swing set also without a path.

SILVER LAKE			
Parking		#	
	Total Spaces	35	Approximate
	Total Handicapped Spaces	4	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	2	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes	
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	No	Parking spaces are not striped
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	Parking spaces are not striped
	Sign with international symbol of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	Yes	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	Yes	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	Yes	Some cracks in asphalt around playgrounds
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)		Unsure of surface slope
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	Yes	No curb; ramp present
Ramps		Yes	1 Ramp
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	Yes	Mobi Mat to beach installed 2023
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	Yes	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	
	No ponding of water	Yes	No ponding at this time
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	Yes	

	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	Yes	
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	No	Berm btwn lot & beach
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	No	Berm btwn lot & beach
Picnicking	A minimum of 5% of the total tables must be accessible with clear space under the table top not less than 30" wide and 19" deep per seating space and not less than 27" clear from the ground to the underside of the table. An additional 29" clear space (totaling 48") must extend beyond the 19" clear space under the table to provide access.	No	There are four standard picnic tables at the site, none of which meet the specified clearance requirements. Additionally, they are not accessible by any sort of accessible path.
	For tables without toe clearance, the knee space under the table must be at least 28" high, 30" wide and 24" deep.	No	
	Top of table no higher than 32" above ground	Yes	
	Surface of the clear ground space under and around the table must be stable, firm, and slip resistant, and evenly graded with a maximum slope of 2% in all directions	No	Grassed area
	Accessible tables, grills and fire rings must have clear ground space of at least 36" around the perimeter.	Yes	

Arcand Park/ Jenks Reservoir



Location: Pulaski Boulevard
Parcel No.: 0088-0008-0000
Acreage: 4.00 (Arcand Park) 96.2 total
Jurisdiction: Conservation Commission
Facilities: Jenks Reservoir consists of a small beach with picnic tables. The beach is accessible by an unpaved, unmarked parking lot that fits about 25 cars. There are no designated handicapped spaces. The site does not provide restrooms. There is an unpaved sand path from the lot to the beach, but nothing to provide handicapped access.

ARCAND PARK/JENKS RESERVOIR			
		#	
Parking	Total Spaces	N/A	Large (about 27,000 square foot, unstriped lot)
	Total Handicapped Spaces	0	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	N/A	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes	

	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	No	Parking spaces are not striped
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	Parking spaces are not striped
	Sign with international symbl of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	No	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	No	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	Yes	Area not perfect
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	N/A	Unsure of surface slope
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	No	
Ramps		No	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	Yes	
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	Yes	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	Area not perfect
	No ponding of water	Yes	No ponding at this time
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	Yes	
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	Yes	
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	

	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	No	Beach/grass area elevated above parking lot
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	No	Beach/grass area elevated above parking lot

Blackstone Street Fields



Location: Blackstone Street
Parcel No.: 0060-0008-0000, 0060-0007-0000
Acreage: 25+
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission
Facilities: Multiple fields for baseball, soccer, lacrosse, parking lot, path

The Blackstone Street Fields are accessible by an access road next to the new track on Blackstone Street that also provides access to the new High School. The road terminates at a small paved parking area with four designated handicapped spaces. The facility includes a football field, a full sized soccer field, a multi-use field between them, and a baseball field with a soccer/football/lacrosse field at the back of the outfield. There is an unpaved path around the perimeter of the fields.

BLACKSTONE STREET FIELDS			
		#	
Parking	Total Spaces	34	
	Total Handicapped Spaces	9	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	2	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes	All accessible spots are close to different access point

Accessible Spaces			
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	Yes	
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	Yes	At least 4 spaces have aisles wide enough to accommodate
	Sign with international symbol of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	No	The symbol is painted but no signage
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	N/A	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	Yes	Asphalt
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	Minimal slopes through parking areas
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	No	There are no cuts in the curb, but the roadway itself may provide access when the gate is open
Ramps		No	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	Yes	
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	No	Not marked but space available
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	Dirt road ending in paved handicapped parking area
	No ponding of water	No	Not at the time
Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	Yes	
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	No	Dirt pathway, firm but may be slippery when wet
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	Yes	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	Yes	

High Street Fields



Location: High Street
Parcel No.: 0040-0019-0000
Acreage: 5.00
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission and Conservation Commission
Facilities: Softball fields, batting cages, parking lot, concession stand, picnic tables.

The High St Fields recreation area includes three softball fields and two screened batting cages. The site is accessible by an unmarked paved parking lot that appears to hold about 35 vehicles, in addition to a dirt area for parking that extends outward from the paved area. There are four designated handicapped parking spaces at the facility. There are no paths, stairs or ramps anywhere on the grounds. The fields each have dugouts which are not handicapped accessible, and portable toilets are provided during summer There are also five picnic tables near the concessions facility, two of which are handicapped accessible but none of which are accessible via a pathway.

HIGH STREET FIELDS			
		#	
Parking	Total Spaces	N/A	Unmarked spaces for around 35
	Total Handicapped Spaces	3	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	2	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes	Three marked spaces near the concessions
	Drop-off area is provided within 100 feet	No	No marked drop-off
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	No	Space available but unmarked
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	No spaces marked for vans
	Sign with international symbol of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	Yes	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	Yes	
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	No	Paved but becoming cracked
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	No	
Ramps		No	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	No	
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	No	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	No	
	No ponding of water	No	Ponding present

Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	No path	
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	N/A	
	3ft. Wide min.	N/A	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	N/A	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	N/A	

Town Common



Location: Mendon Street
Parcel No.: 0044-0028-0000
Acreage: 7.85
Jurisdiction: Parks Commission, Town Common Trustees Committee
Facilities: Gazebo, benches, playground, monuments

The Town Common is a passive recreation area accessible by two paved parking lots: one off North Main Street and the other off Mendon Street. In total, the lots have about 40 spaces. The lots provide access to the common via a paved pathway network. The pathways provide access all around the site including to the parking lots, gazebo, small playground, and the monuments on Mendon Street. They are lined with benches. These benches have backs and rails. The gazebo is surrounded mostly by stairs but also includes a small handicapped ramp with a railing but a steep grade of about 40% The benches inside the gazebo have no backs or rails.

TOWN COMMON			
		#	
Parking	Total Spaces	40	
	Total Handicapped Spaces	4	
	Required Handicapped Spaces	1-2	
		Yes/No	**Comments**
Specification for Accessible Spaces	Accessible Space located closest to accessible entrance	Yes	
	Drop-off area is provided within 100 feet	No	Not marked
	Min. width of 13ft. Includes 8ft space plus 5ft access aisle	Yes	
	Van space - Min of 1 van space for every accessible space, 8 ft aisle. Alternative is to make all accessible spaces 11ft. Wide with 5ft aisle	No	None marked
	Sign with international symbol of accessibility at each space or pair of spaces	Yes	
	Sign min. 5ft maximum 8ft to top of sign	No	Do not meet height requirements
	Surface evenly paced or hard-packed (no cracks)	Yes	
	Surface slope less than 1:20 (5%)	Yes	
	Curb cut to pathway from parking lot at each space or pair of spaces, if sidewalk (curb) is present	No	
Ramps		Yes	
Site Access	Accessible path of travel from passenger disembarking area and parking area to accessible entrance	Yes	
	Disembarking area at accessible entrance	No	
	Surface evenly paved or hard-packed	Yes	
	No ponding of water	Yes	

Path of Travel	Path does not require the use of stairs	Yes	
	Path is stable, firm and slip resistant	Yes	
	3ft. Wide min.	Yes	
	Slope max 5% and max cross pitch is 2%	Yes	
	Continuous common surface, no changes in level greater than 1/2 inch	Yes	

SURVEY DATA AND RESULTS

Survey Request:



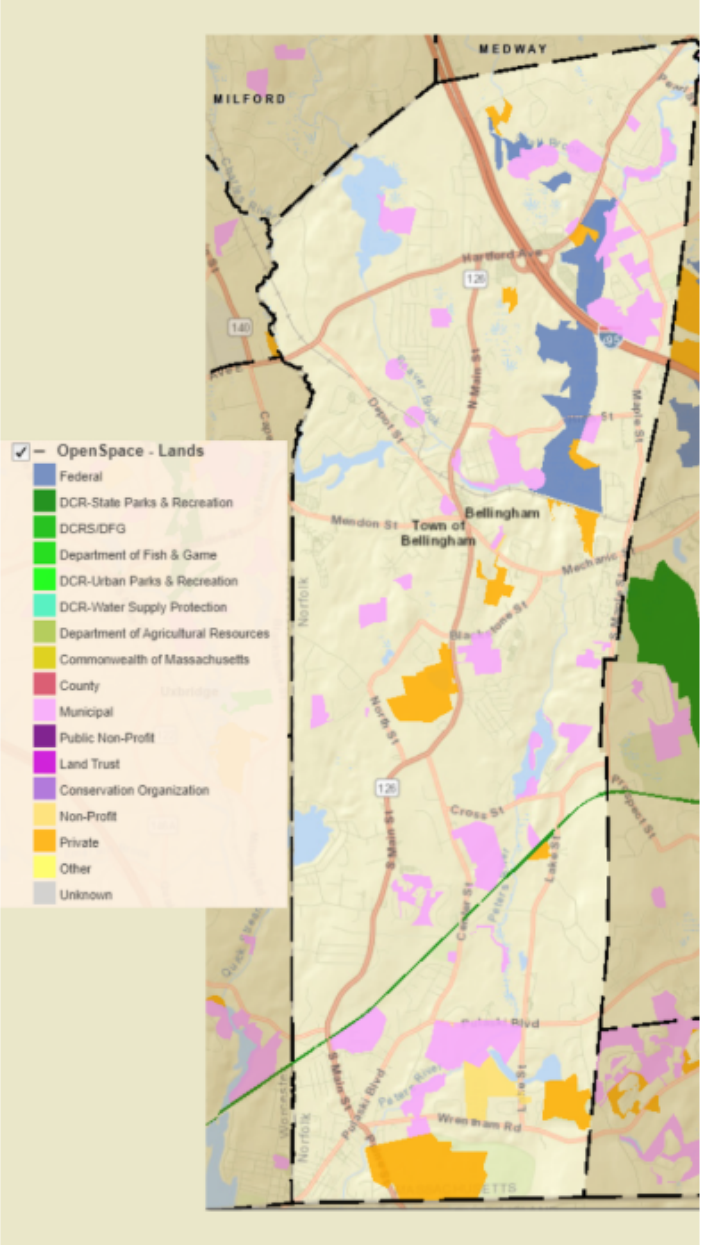
Survey Introduction:

Bellingham's Open Space and Recreation Plan 2024
Thank you so much for taking the Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey. The information you give will help the town determine what is important to the community and make a 5-year action plan that will benefit Bellingham's patrons and its natural environment. Results will be shared in the 2024 Open Space and Recreation Plan. If you have any questions, please contact the Conservation Administrator Hannah Crawford.

What is Open Space? The term "open space" is often used to refer to conservation land, forested land, recreation land, agricultural land, corridor parks and amenities such as small parks, green buffers along roadways or any open area that is owned by an agency or organization dedicated to conservation.

Survey Questions:

Does the town need more Open Space? The map below shows current Open Space areas.



- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I don't know

What should the Town of Bellingham prioritize in identifying lands for protection or acquisition? Please only use each number once.

Increasing space for recreation/community events

	1	2	3	4	5	
Most important	○	○	○	○	○	Least important

Increasing areas that address climate related issues (heat/flooding)

	1	2	3	4	5	
Most important	○	○	○	○	○	Least important

Providing areas that connect existing open spaces to each other

	1	2	3	4	5	
Most important	○	○	○	○	○	Least important

Increasing open space in areas where there is limited park access or are experiencing significant increases in population

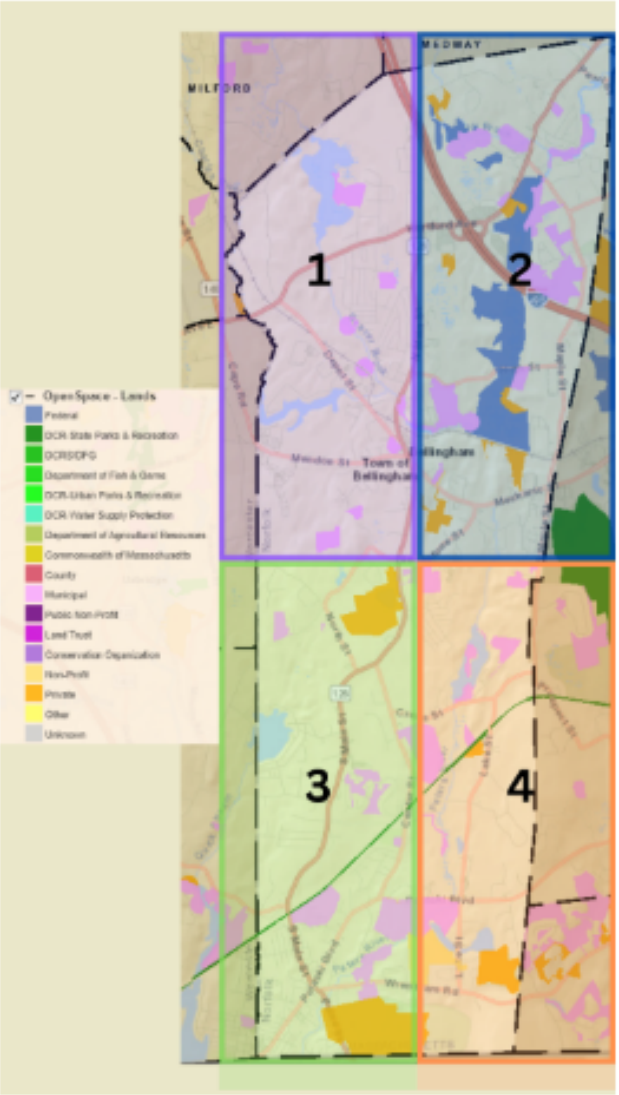
	1	2	3	4	5	
Most important	○	○	○	○	○	Least important

Protecting areas of conservation or ecological value

	1	2	3	4	5	
Most important	○	○	○	○	○	Least important

Where do you wish there was open space and why?

Choose from quadrants 1-4 based on the map and explain why that quadrant would benefit from having more open space (For Example: not enough green space, too hot and needs shade, space to connect trails/spaces, reoccurring flood area, natural area in need of protection, etc).



Your answer

Open Space Properties

1. During the past year, have you visited any of the Town open spaces listed below? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Whitehall Way
- [ ] High Ridge
- [ ] Maple Street
- [ ] High Street
- [ ] Mendon/North Street
- [ ] Saddleback Hill Road
- [ ] Castle Lane
- [ ] Maddie Way
- [ ] Silver Lake Beach
- [ ] Arcand Park
- [ ] Pulaski Boulevard
- [ ] Deer Run
- [ ] Town Common
- [ ] Crooks Corner Common
- [ ] SNETT
- [ ] Other:

What features or facilities should we provide to better meet your needs? Select all that applies to you.

- [ ] More restrooms
- [ ] More natural areas
- [ ] More dog parks
- [ ] More picnic areas
- [ ] More water play features
- [ ] More athletic fields
- [ ] More athletic courts
- [ ] More children's play areas
- [ ] More environmental education programs
- [ ] I am satisfied with the current facilities
- [ ] Other:

Are there any challenges or barriers that prevent you from enjoying Bellingham's parks? Select all that apply to you.

- [ ] Lack of information
- [ ] Lack of parking
- [ ] Limited bike or walking access
- [ ] Feeling unsafe at the park
- [ ] Lack of accessibility
- [ ] There are no challenges or barriers for me
- [ ] Other:

Town of Bellingham

What can the Town of Bellingham do to improve the quality of the parks in Bellingham?

Your answer

What actions do you think would encourage you to increase use of open space sites? Select all that apply to you.

- [ ] More information: town website
- [ ] More information: cable access
- [ ] More information: newspaper
- [ ] More information: school notices
- [ ] Events: town-sponsored hikes
- [ ] Events: town clean up days
- [ ] Events: school events
- [ ] Access: sidewalks/trail connections
- [ ] Access: maps
- [ ] Other:

Do you have any other suggestions or comments that haven't been mentioned in this survey?

Your answer

What is your age range?

- ( ) 0-9
- ( ) 10-19
- ( ) 20-34
- ( ) 35-54
- ( ) 55-64
- ( ) 65-84
- ( ) 85+

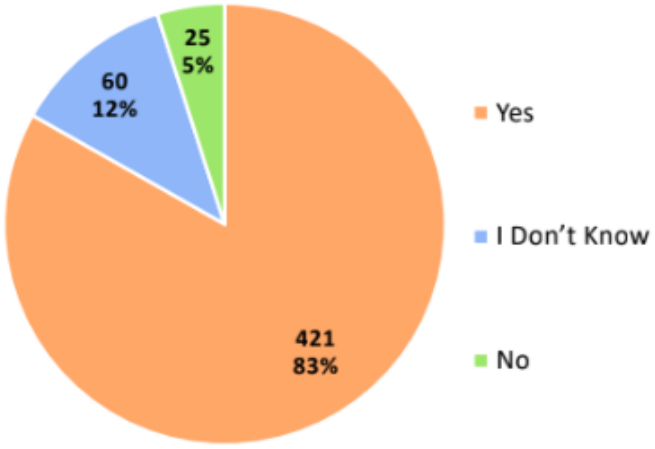
What do you identify as?

- ( ) Female
- ( ) Male
- ( ) Non-binary, Transgender, Other

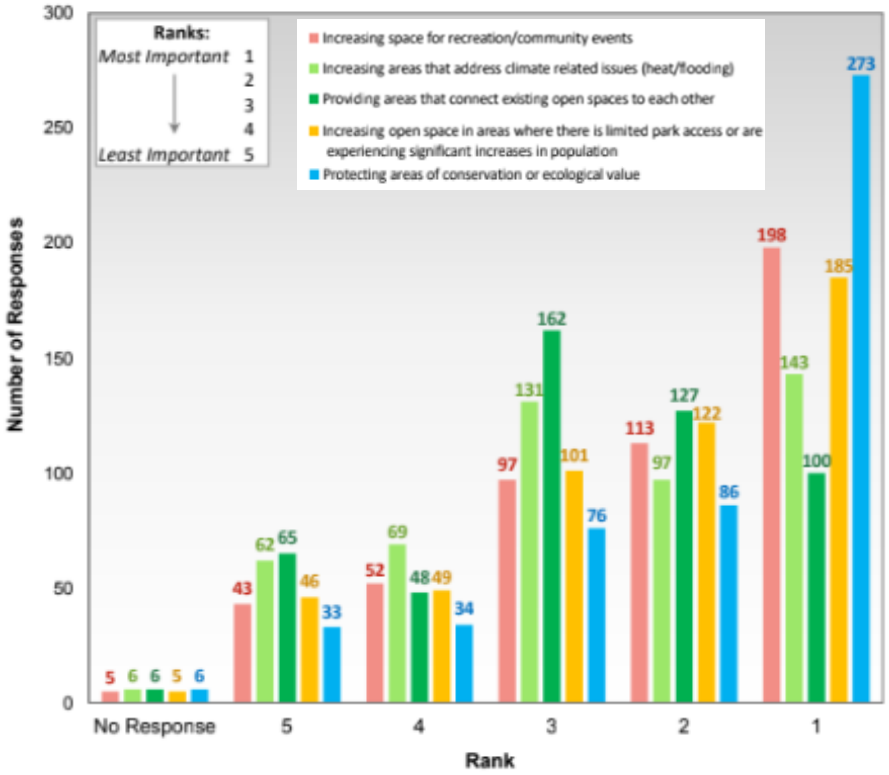
Thank you so much for helping the town utilize its space in the best way possible!

Survey Results and Analysis:

Does the town need more open space?
Responses: 509



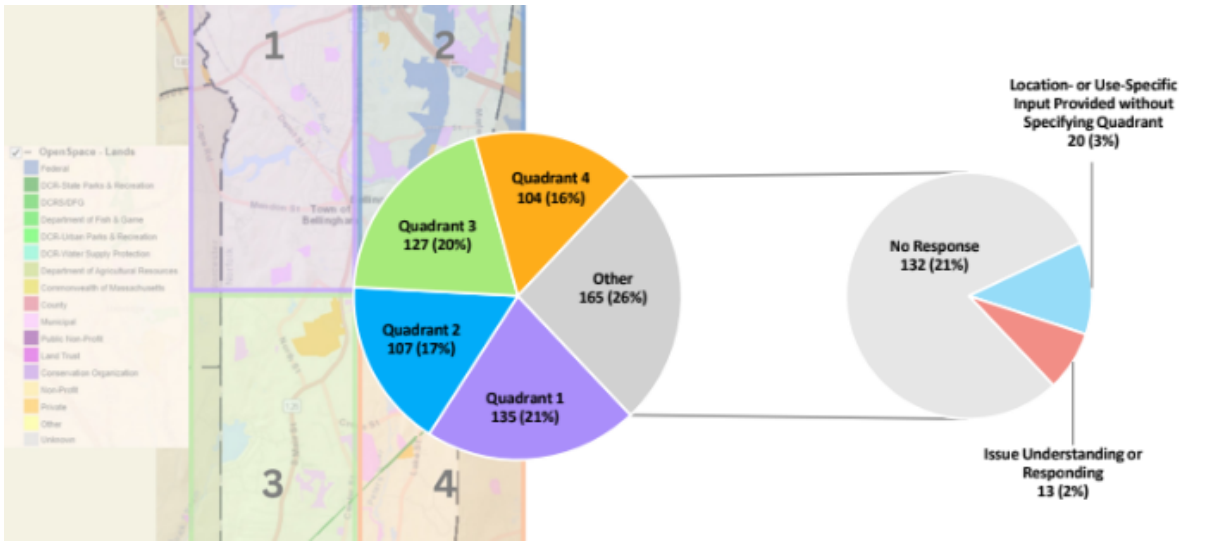
What should the Town of Bellingham Prioritize in Identifying Lands for Protection and Acquisition? Please only use each number once.
Multiple Choice
Responses: 503/504 out of 509

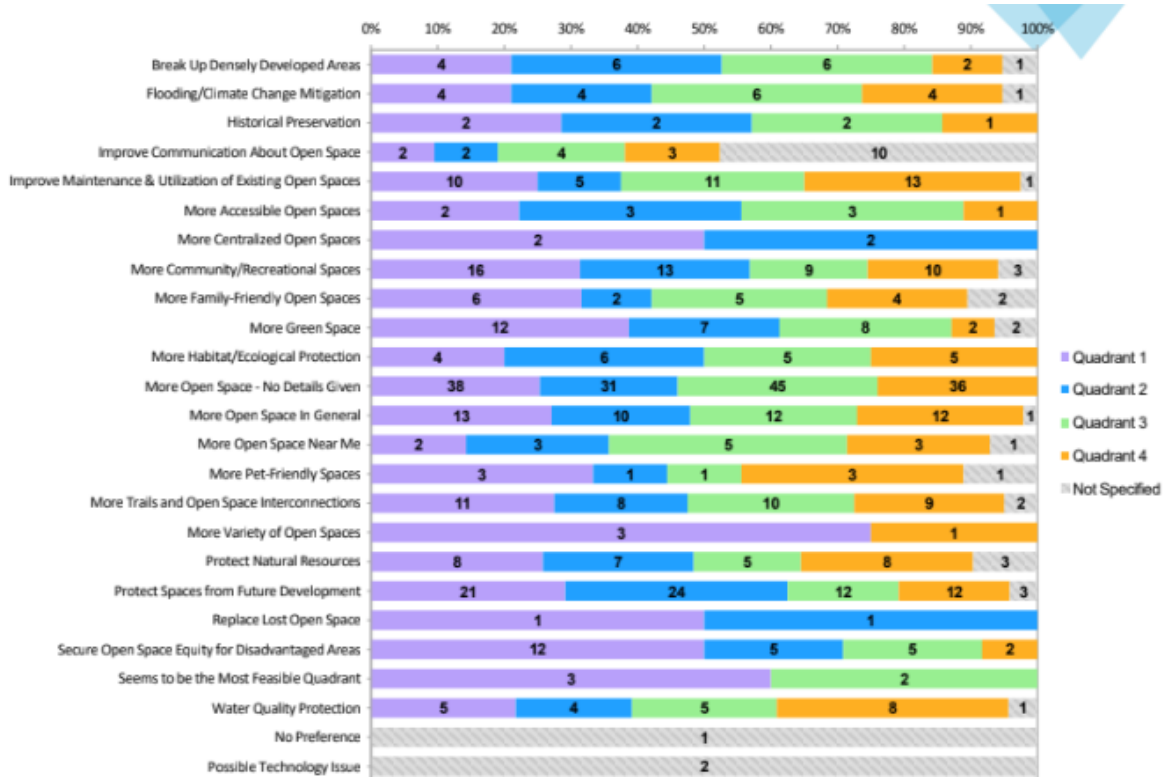


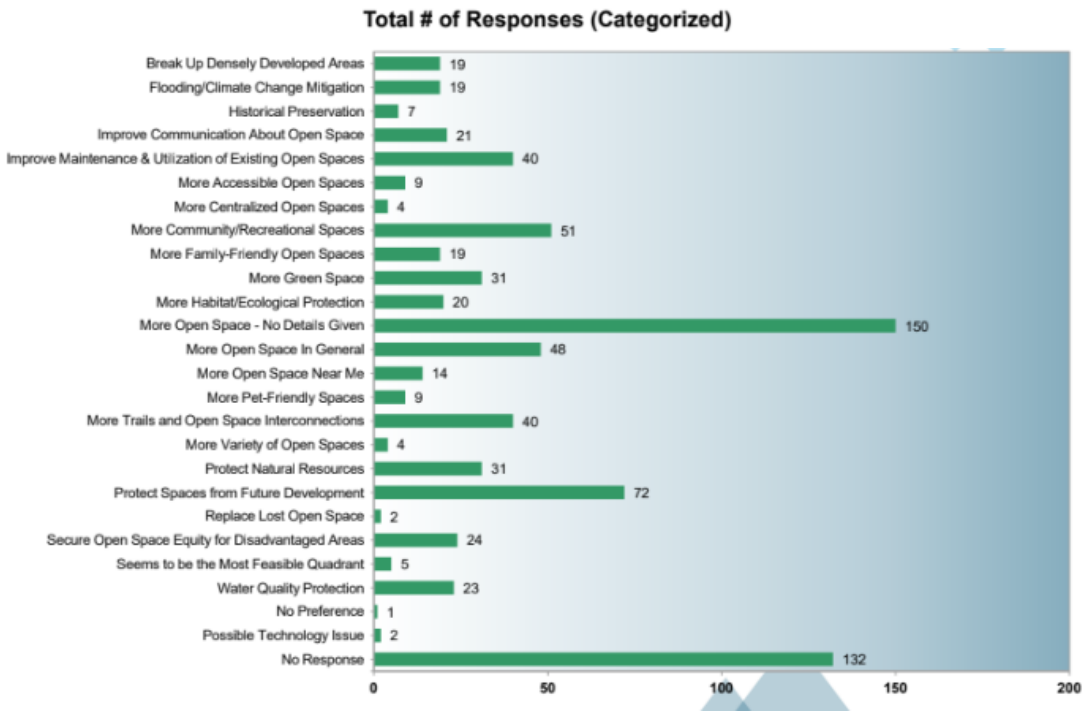
Where do you wish there was more open space and why? Coose from quadrants 1-4 based on the map and explain why that quadrant would benefit from having more open space.

Write in

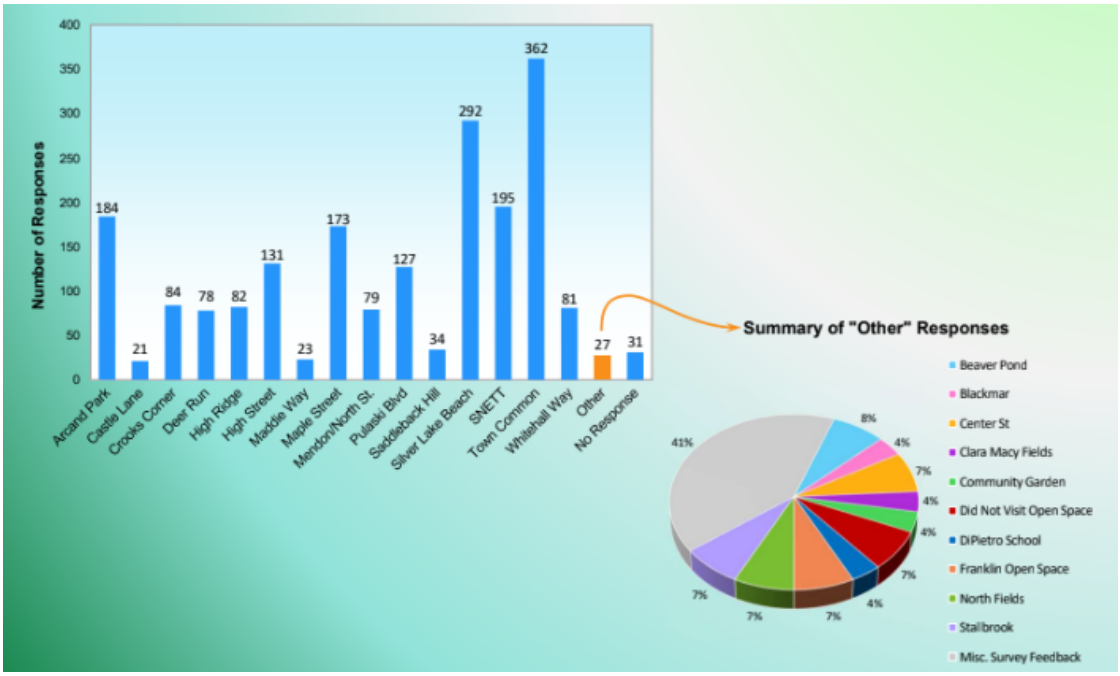
Responses: 377 out of 509



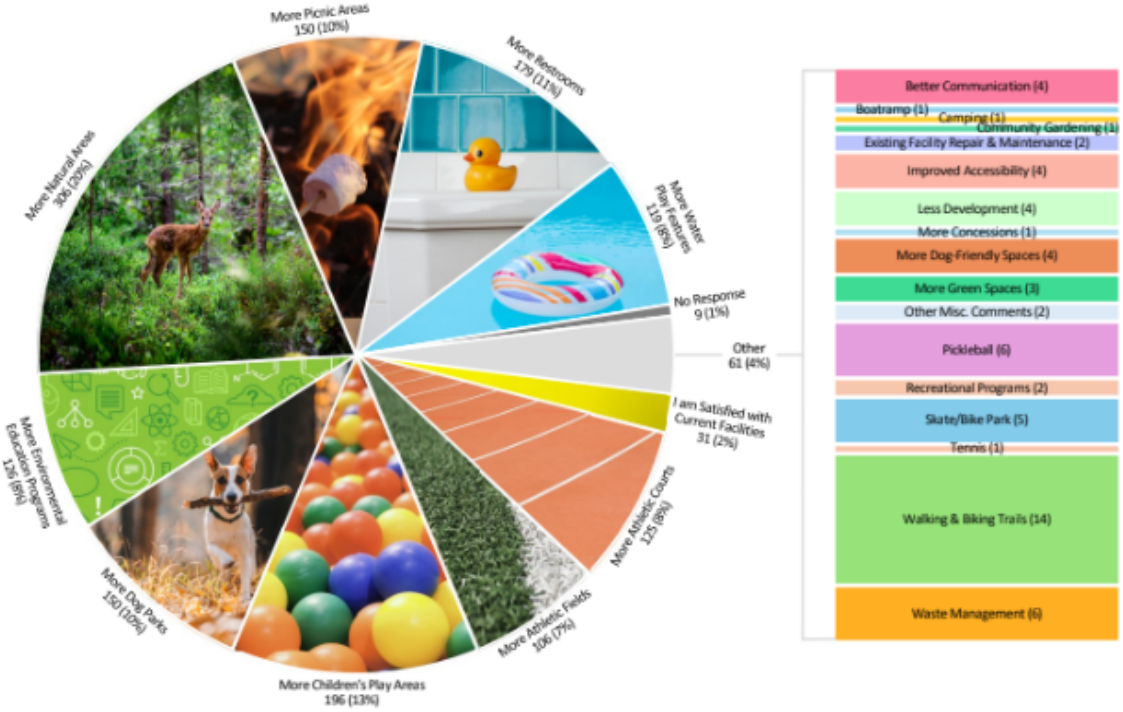




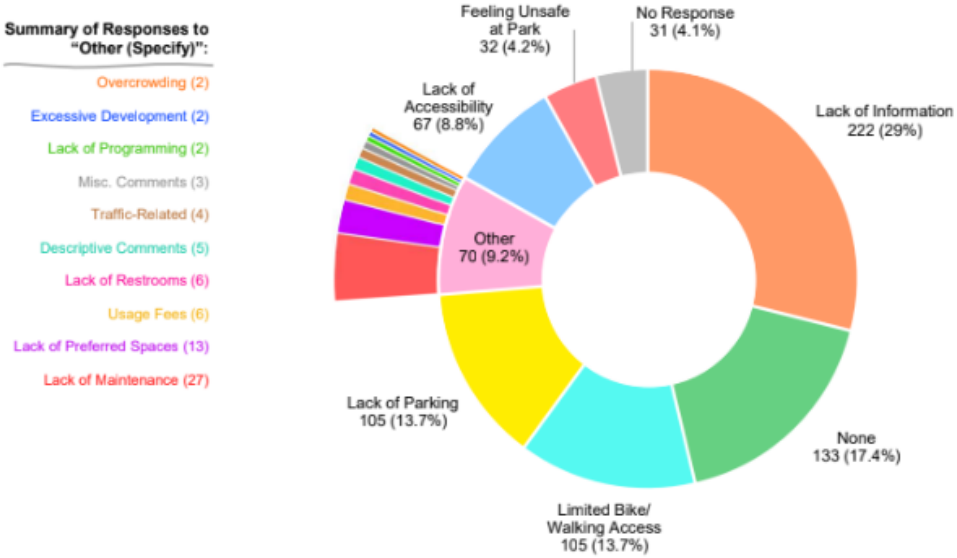
During the past year, have you visited any of the Town Open Spaces listed below?
Multiple Choice
Responses: 478 out of 509



What features or facilities should we provide to better meet your needs?
Write in
Responses: 509



Are there any challenges or barriers that prevent you from enjoying Bellingham's parks?
Multiple Choice and Write-in
Responses: 478 out of 509



What actions do you think would encourage you to increase use of open space sites?
Multiple choice and Write-in
Responses: 481 out of 509



Respondents who selected "Other" provided additional information that generally fit into the following categories:

- Wanting more information about Open Space through other means of communication (15):
  - Social Media (6)
  - Newsletters & Pamphlets (3)
  - Better Signage at Open Space (2)
  - Email Communications (2)
  - Door-to-Door Awareness Campaigns (1)
  - Other non-specific Awareness Campaigns (1)
- Better maintenance & upkeep of existing Open Space (6)
- Miscellaneous, e.g., opinions, advice (5)
- More Parking for Open Space (2)
- More Planned Recreation, such as a Parks & Recreation Department (2)
- Providing supplementary information about another selection (2)
- Community Engagement (1)
- One (1) respondent would like more Brazilian Food, presumably at or near Open Space!
- One (1) response appears to have not been completed prior to survey submission

Do you have any suggestions or concerns that haven't been mentioned in this survey?
Write-in
Responses: 156 people responded to this question

Do you have any other suggestions or comments that haven't been mentioned in this survey?
No
No
N/a
Need more communication between boards. Before any add (bldg?) consider our resources ie water, schools, traffic
Stop building residential bldg, puts more pressure on traffic, not enough schools, water
Encourage Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts or youth groups to do community service hours
no
None
More sidewalks for walking - especially lower Blackstone Street. Stop overdevelopment. Too much traffic on single access roads like 140 and 126 by shopping areas.
No

I would suggest focusing on beautifying the parks and rec areas that already exist.
My only comment is that there is too much building in Bellingham. It seems as if I go to an area that I haven't been to for a while I no longer recognize it because of all the new buildings. I also don't want to see more condos being built. Leave whatever open areas are left alone and let them just be.
Would like more updates on progress of town projects.
I know very little about each area and what the features are of each area! Maybe highlight each area in an email once or twice a month so more people know about them. Also, areas where dogs can play would be great, so many people have dogs in town.
Modernize. Utilize social media to disseminate information.
No
N/A
No
Restrooms and trash containers
No
access maps on town website
the town website has to be updated constantly
Please work with the Planning Board to advocate for commercial developments to prioritize at least 50% of the property being designated as conservation areas or green spaces. The town has done a good job requiring conservation easements as part of the residential developments. This needs to be done for commercial projects as well.
I've seen little to no information on this topic during the 3 plus years I have lived here.
no
Stop building and keep the woods and fields
More sidewalks
Keep wildlife in mind. They been loosing the home because of all the o construction.
Bellingham is in desperate need of more playground space for children as well as hiking trails being updated
Clean ups and make the abandoned buildings in north Bellingham into an open space- it is disgusting that is what greets anyone who enters our town.
The town should have a parks and rec department who can coordinate community wide events and programs. There are too many independent organizations (BBA, VFW, all rec sports leagues, Women of Today, library, senior center, community garden, SNETT; just to name a few) who try to run town events/programs and communication is not organized in a streamlined way, many events have poor turnout because there are too many channels residents have to follow along with to hear about them. Bellingham should model Franklin park and rec department, they are incredibly organized.
Create side walk all the way to DiPietro along Main Street
Who is going to oversee these areas, DPW since parks dept gone.
No
Make it look nice. less gas stations, pizza, liquor, and Walgreens, more green space and trees

Bellingham should reach out to the sports programs in town and partner with them to figure out what is needed to help their programs be successful - Lacrosse, Basketball, etc.
people should pick up after them Selfs, not throw trash on trails..
no
No
Have an Eagle Scout or intern put together a comprehensive guide to the Bellingham parks and open space areas.
No more solar farms
We need a Park and Rec Director. We could offer evening programs at our schools or senior center. They could coordinate the maintenance of our current facilities. The athletic fields need maintenance badly. Currently there are volunteers trying to do a lot of the work. There is not real fertilization plan. Compared to surrounding towns, we are way behind in this area.
Look at Franklin's King St Park and the field on Beaver St. We don't have anything close to them. Those are in addition to Pisani/Fletcher and the High School complex.
I think we need more open space in general that is protected space that cannot be built upon, even if it isn't utilized as parks or trails.
During recent construction on the SNETT, trail mileage markers were removed. It would be helpful if new mileage markers were installed, and additional signage/maps were installed to highlight open spaces, similar to what is installed in Franklin.
Leave open space for wildlife
Your increase in housing as caused havoc on the Arnold brook. All the street water run off from white hall way, fox run and newland Ave has affected the houses on elaine circle and lizotte. This needs to be addressed!
Town needs more sidewalks and to update existing ones.
No
With all the warehouses and apartments going up in the area it would be nice to just have open space and keep the natural areas that we have
Didn’t know about some of the open spaces off some of the roads.
The website really needs some attention. Archive old posts 👍🏽
No
Please stop with the warehouses! Constant semi truck traffic is causing back ups and unsafe roads to walk on. Making people want to love out of the small town. All the ware house are not inviting and not giving Bellingham the small town feel any more
I’d be happy to get more involved in the planning if you are looking for community volunteers! /email redacted/
Thank you
Less warehouses and more recreational activities for families is a must- also a new school
Stop the developments the town needs to stay as it is and not be adding tons of more people to a town that the schools are already maxed out

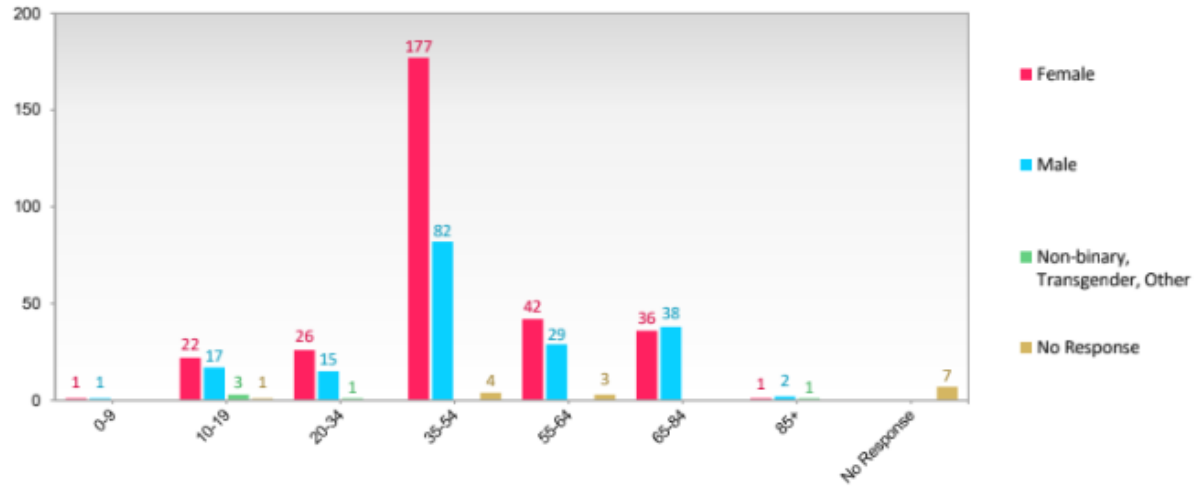
The amount of trash on the sides of the roads and in open spaces in town needs to be addressed on a more frequent basis. It is an embarrassment. Also, I would estimate that a lot of the trash is generated by transient RI traffic. How do we involve the State of RI with this solution , funding or otherwise ?
Not enough family friendly spaces in town
Open space should counter development which is putting the town at capacity.
Safety planning signage
Wildlife has no where to go. Too many warehouses taking up beautiful pieces of land.
Many of the open space parcels listed have obscure or no signage. Designated parking notices are essential to identify and keep neighbors cooperating to protect these areas.
Follow Bellingham Master Plan, link trolley right of way to Snett and protect our drinking water wells acquifer from septic systems.
No
More community events held in the open spaces
Create a social media page specifically for this issue
Some areas in this town that are zoned industrial should be rezoned. The other day I saw a large coyote den just yards away where a proposed warehouse will be built. Where would these animals. The town should look into grants/funding/technical assistance from government or other organizations to address these areas and attempt to mitigate the harm that’s already been inflicted upon our community.
Less building
Stop building apartments like the new ones on Mechanic Street
I think the suggestion I made in the first section is very important. I want to provide valuable feedback, but could use a 10 minute lesson on types of open space and how each type can be used.
If there is any way to create public use trails (e.g. rail trail, bike path, wooded trail) it should be priority number one IMO.
The work done on the SNETT has been amazing. It would great to the renovations brought to the Blackstone line.
Keep the town garden on Center Street
Thank you for putting an effort toward conservation
no
More sidewalks
More focus on highlighting Town open spaces and interest in these areas with support and awareness campaigns/funding would be beneficial. (Similar to other towns.)
Pickleball courts. Many of the surrounding towns are installing or already have them: Medway, Milford, Franklin, Millis, Foxborough
Great place to live, just trying to make it better.
Bellingham used to be a nice calm town there are way way to many warehouses that cause massive traffic issues and take up all available space. The amount of high income apartments also negates any work we can do on this. Too many people to many cars we are basically a warehouse town with limit3d parking.
Why doesn’t the town do carnivals?

I live on Deer Run Road - i have NO idea where the Deer Run open space is, at all. So i'm going to say - maybe it's not the need for more open space but rather letting people know what's where and how they can use it. A website (not a page) dedicated to the space, gps locations, available facilities, hours and parking details to help ease some of the anxieties that come with trying out something new.
Be innovative , multifunctional spaces that mix ages together appropriately, maybe something for the teens , skate park along w a splash park for the little ones and shaded area for adults to enjoy
School outings to clean up and explore the trails we have! 30 minutes outside is driving such a disconnect with what you're looking to protect… involve the kids, allow them more time outside in these open spaces together to make change AND learn!
Would l9ve more environmental education and awareness programs
The town needs to maintain the space more consistently, the town common looks beautiful but then you go to the water park at silver lake and not everything works, or in the summer there is no grassy areas because of lack of sprinklers or weeds that are overgrown
More play options around town for children ages 7 and up
Yes, making Main street a safe space for walking or bike ridding would be a huge plus
There are way too many new housing developments and warehouses. We need to consider instituting a quota or an acerage minimum for square feet of a building
Stop the sale of land to investors that put up concrete monstrosities!
No
More community events, ie. concert, movie at the park, food truck
Area middle school athletic field really needs update
Better and elaborate communication. We need town leadership to be open and listeners to the community. Town meetings are not enough to obtain feedback towards valuable action.
we need a down town area, bull doze that empty old bank in the center and open up that plaza more.
Large playground makes more sense at school property on Blackstone St. The Town Common is a fairly small parcel designed for quiet enjoyment.
No
Stop building apartments and warehouses
I think the town is doing a great job so far. Use of the commons and school fields for larger events I think is just right.
There is way too much being shoved into this town. Traffic is horrible and there are still new builds occurring. South Bellingham on Palaski boulevard looks awful with way too many power lines
no
We need more green spaces and less building of houses and distribution centers
With proper guidance and leadership the community garden could be a community based center of education and a resource.
Stop building and clearing areas. You are driving wildlife out of their homes. Don't create something that we already have several of in town.
Thank you for encouraging Bellingham residents to provide feedback
Out open space is disappearing rapidly in a sea of warehouses promulgated by poor Planning Board and Selectboard decisions. Stop making this town a crummy place to be.

I'd like more awareness and information made readily available
N/A
no
no
No
no.
no
NO
No
No
no
no
none
no
no
Nope
MORE FOOD OPTIONS (BRAZILAIN FOOD)
No.
brazzilian food
No
no
Add highways to south Bellingham
no
ekgdyw3eg4jf
no
no
no
no
no this survey is all set
skate park
No
cvghuqiahc vxhscv hbjdsb hj

add a chipolte
Perhaps a poster size map of these areas to be posted at the post office, library, town hall. Also a letter size printable map with the open areas highlighted in the front and on the back the DPW which could be posted in the town website.
No
no
Survey itself hard to understand
PLEASE stop the warehouses - bellingham has more than enough. The traffic that they bring is out of control
Town of Medway as many activities for adults and kids. Check out their website.
Protect our wetlands & limit development
Open spaces are currently not take care of by the town. So much trash is all over natural areas. Would the parks department or DPW take on the responsibility to keep open space clean and natural?
Stop building. Start conserving the land the town has left.
Keep up the conservation, open space focus. Good work!
More natural and quiet spaces or trails that are removed from roadways, cars. In essence, provide a more nature-like setting.
ADA accessible
town needs to have larger lot size minimums - new construction needs to stop

What is your age range? What do you identify as?



Public Forum Outreach material:

