

# TOWN OF WATERTOWN

## • OPEN SPACE And RECREATION PLAN



2005 Update

Department of Community Development & Planning  
Watertown, Massachusetts  
*Final Edition*

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

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## SECTION 1 - PLAN SUMMARY

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The 2005 Watertown Open Space and Recreation Plan Update has been developed to provide a renewed policy statement for ensuring the protection of the town's open space and recreational resources. The purpose of this plan is to: 1) review the goals and objectives set forth in the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update, 2) note which of those goals were achieved 3) review current open space and recreational needs of residents 4) set new goals and objectives for the next five years and 5) provide a framework to effect changes in determining Watertown's course as it copes with development and redevelopment, and new community interests and concerns.

The updating process includes comparing goals and objectives set forth in the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan to the current needs and concerns of Watertown residents today. Since the 1996 Plan, there has been no change in the amount of publicly owned open space. During this time, most of the Town's playgrounds have been renovated and new equipment and surfaces have been installed. Private parcels, however, have seen significant change. Infill of private acreage with residential and commercial structures and re-use of under-developed lots have become major concerns for the town as the quantity of buildable lots has largely been exhausted. The intensification of development has many residents concerned about their neighborhoods and realizing the significance of open space on privately owned parcels throughout the town. For these reasons, the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update Task Force has recognized the need for more planning for privately owned open space and there is increased emphasis on private parcels in this report.

The Town has been undertaking a process of self examination regarding development, to the point of considering, but not undertaking, a moratorium on the demolition of single family homes that are being replaced by larger homes and multi-family homes. The issue remains controversial as limited private open space is further constricted by new developments that take full advantage of zoning dimensional standards such as setbacks and lot coverage. The Town also faces development pressures to house large residential developments that will change the face of private open space. The Open Space and Recreation Plan Task Force (hereinafter referred to as the Task Force) seeks to go beyond a simple inventory of the public and private parcels of open space and/or recreational significance and to create a five-year plan of action for the town. It is the intention of the Task Force that this plan will provide the various town departments, commissions, and committees a basis for consistent direction in regard to decisions affecting development, zoning, acquisition, maintenance, and preservation of open space and/or recreation areas.

Watertown's Open Space and Recreation Plan has been compiled in accordance with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services, requirements and guidelines. The State requires that all municipalities file an Open Space and Recreation Plan every five years in order to be eligible for state and federal grant aid offered through the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

## SECTION 2 - INTRODUCTION

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### A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this plan is to identify Watertown's open space and recreational resources and to produce a consistent policy directive for town agencies, in order to ensure that these resources are not lost due to the pressures of development or uncoordinated individual actions that affect the town's open space and recreational system. This plan aims to facilitate a consistent policy directive regarding development and preservation of public and private properties as they collectively comprise Watertown's open space and recreational system. **This plan also serves as the Town's policy directive regarding specific goals, objectives, and actions for the coming five years with regard to open space and recreation.**

### B. PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Update was initiated in June 2004 with the formation of a 9-member Open Space and Recreation Plan Update Task Force appointed by the Town Manager. It is comprised of individuals with expertise in areas such as conservation, recreation, planning, urban design, landscape architecture and public works. Staff support was provided by former Conservation Agent Bruce Roberts, current Conservation Agent Christopher Hayward and Conservation and Historical Commission Assistant Daphne Collins and by Senior Planner Mary Crain, and Zoning Assistant Louise Civetti, under the guidance of the Director of the Department of Community Development and Planning, Gregory Watson. The Task Force Members are as follows:

*Susan Falkoff, Town Council, Task Force Chair*

*Charles Bering, Conservation Commission member*

*Peter Brooks, Bicycle Committee member and Citizen at Large*

*Jeff Brown, Planning Board member*

*Roger Erickson, Historical Commission member*

*Leo Martin, Conservation Commission member*

*Gerald Mee, Public Works Superintendent*

*Tony Paolillo, School Committee Chair*

*Juana Salazar, Planning Board member (resigned)*

*Thomas Sullivan, Recreation Department Director*

The planning process began with a review of the expanded planning requirements outlined by E.O.E.A. These requirements were then compared to the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Several meetings were held starting in June of 2004 to assess open space and recreational changes since the 1996 Plan and to identify open space and recreational priorities. During these early meetings, the group decided that a written questionnaire would be developed for residents. It was

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further agreed that attempts should be made to secure public participation from a broad cross-section to prevent biased conclusions.

In January 2005 the Task Force sent a survey to every Watertown household with the annual Town Census form, as a basis for determining resident's needs and concerns with regard to open space and recreation. The Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey (see Appendix A) was sent to 12,000 Watertown head of households. The Task Force was pleasantly surprised to find that approximately 3,000 surveys were returned, for a return rate of approximately twenty five percent. The extraordinary survey response rate and the wealth of individual comments provided a strong basis to form a survey of needs and opinions of Watertown residents.

Based on the input from the Survey, several Task Force meetings and a public hearing, the Task Force continued to develop the Plan's goals and objectives until the Task Force voted unanimously in favor of adopting the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan as presented. The draft Plan was made available for further public comment. The Open Space and Recreation Plan was presented to the Town Council on March 25, 2008 and subsequently sent to the State for approval.

## SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY SETTING

### A. REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Town of Watertown participates in the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission's Inner Core Sub-region. The Inner Core Committee consists of twenty cities and towns within the metropolitan Boston area. Because they are many of the most urban and populous within the MAPC planning area, Inner Core communities deal with a host of unique challenges. Given the complexity of issues facing these communities, the Inner Core Committee emerged as a forum through which issues of mutual concern could be explored and joint and cooperative action fostered. Committee membership is granted to the Executive Director of MAPC, as well as a representative from the Boston Redevelopment Authority and each of the following communities: Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Saugus, Somerville, Waltham, Watertown & Winthrop.

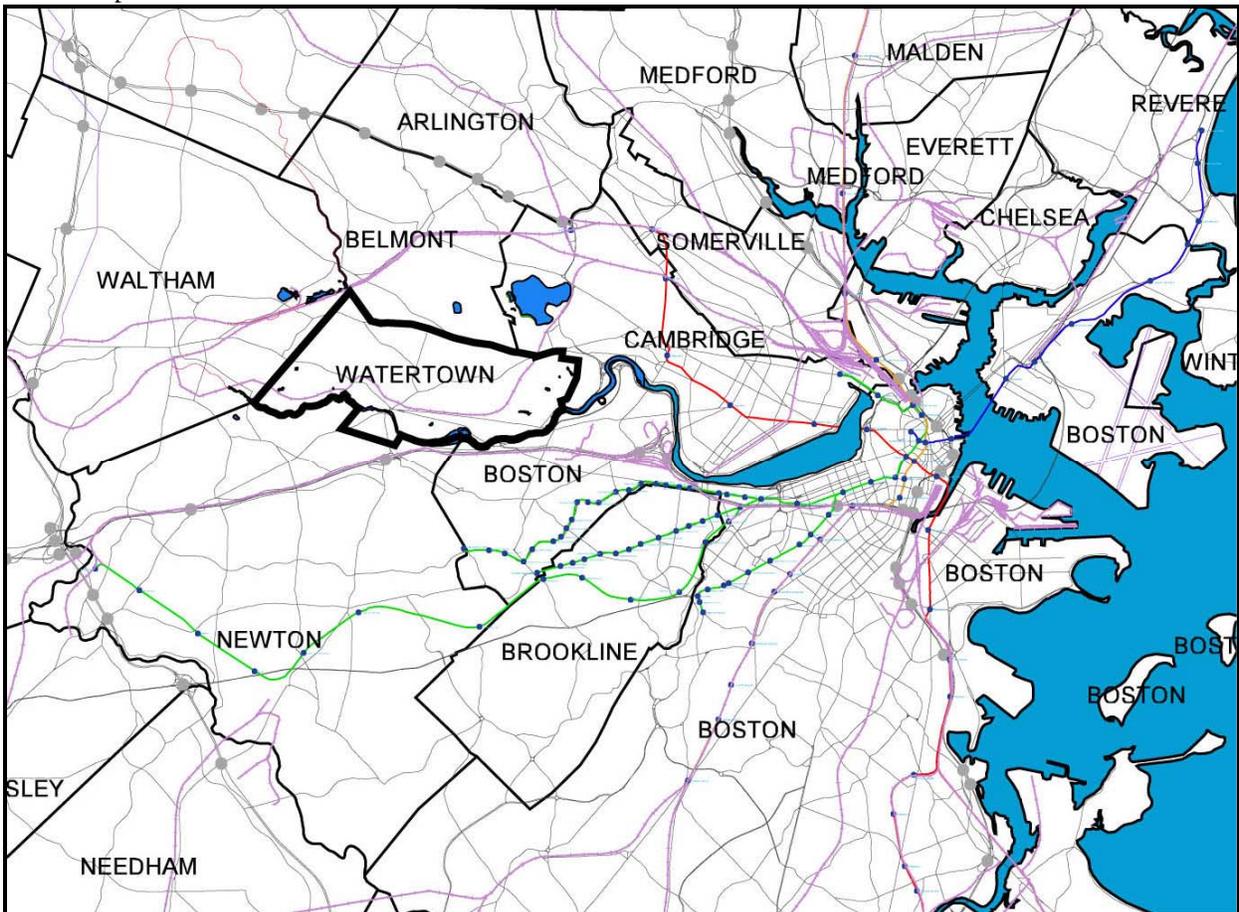


Figure 1 - Regional Context

Located along the banks of the Charles River, Watertown is a high density bedroom community on the immediate outskirts of Boston (see Regional Context Map). With only 4.1 square miles and a population of 32,986 people, Watertown is often seen as a way point to other destinations, typically the outer suburbs beyond Route 128 or to central Boston. This diverse suburb, however, provides its residents with a close-knit community, prime access to economic/medical/education

centers, and a rich 375 year old history going back to America's earliest colonial heritage.

The central "core" of the Town revolves around Watertown Square which is at the intersection of six major streets. This intersection is also a key terminus for commuters accessing public transportation into and out of Boston and Cambridge. The Square is close to the town hall, post office, banks, auto sales/ repair businesses, and several retailers and restaurants.

Watertown is often associated with the U.S. Army Arsenal located on Arsenal Street. The Arsenal has had regional employment, economic, and transportation influence from its introduction 180 years ago to its closure in 1995. Many of the Arsenal property's buildings were preserved and redeveloped into the Arsenal on the Charles, now owned by Harvard University. Previous closure of segments of the Arsenal in the mid-1970's led to the re-use as the Arsenal Mall, Arsenal Park, a Harvard Vanguard medical facility and an elderly housing complex.

Another regionally significant landmark of Watertown is the Mt. Auburn Cemetery, a 175 acre (164 are in Watertown), semi-public open space with numerous pathways that meander through the well kept arboretum. Watertown's most renowned natural feature of regional interest is its proximity to the Charles River which partly serves as the municipal boundary with Newton, its neighbor to the south, and provides major opportunities for passive recreation.

## B. COMMUNITY HISTORY

Founded in 1630, Watertown has been described as the "mother town" as it was one of America's earliest colonial settlements and served as an entry into the heartland of America for early settlers.

These early arrivals to the "New World" were welcomed by Native Americans of the Pequotsette Tribe (a sub-tribe of the Massachusetts Indians) who had a long-established tribal network strategically situated to access the many natural bounties of the Charles River. Early colonial accounts of the area describe the abundance of bass, salmon, and herring making their way to and from the sea for spawning.

The early town boundaries encompassed much of what is now Belmont as well as portions of Waltham and Cambridge. Originally a transit point into the early colonial frontier, in the early 19th century Watertown evolved to become an active industrial community (see Map: View of Watertown, Mass, 1879). Earlier examples of manufacturing and milling can be found, such as the Mayhew Mill, which was built in 1634 as a water-driven corn mill and continued in operation for over two hundred years. Damming the Charles River became commonplace by the early 1800's providing water power for various industries such as cotton weaving, sail making, and linen cleaners. Raw materials and finished products were shipped via water to the port at Boston Harbor and continued on to their final destinations throughout the new nation and the rest of the world. The new nation's need for munitions found Watertown to be ideally located for such manufacturing. Thus the U.S. Army Arsenal was founded in 1816 and continued in operation until its complete closure in 1995. At its height of operations before World War I, the Watertown Arsenal employed over sixteen hundred people and covered an area of over eighty acres.

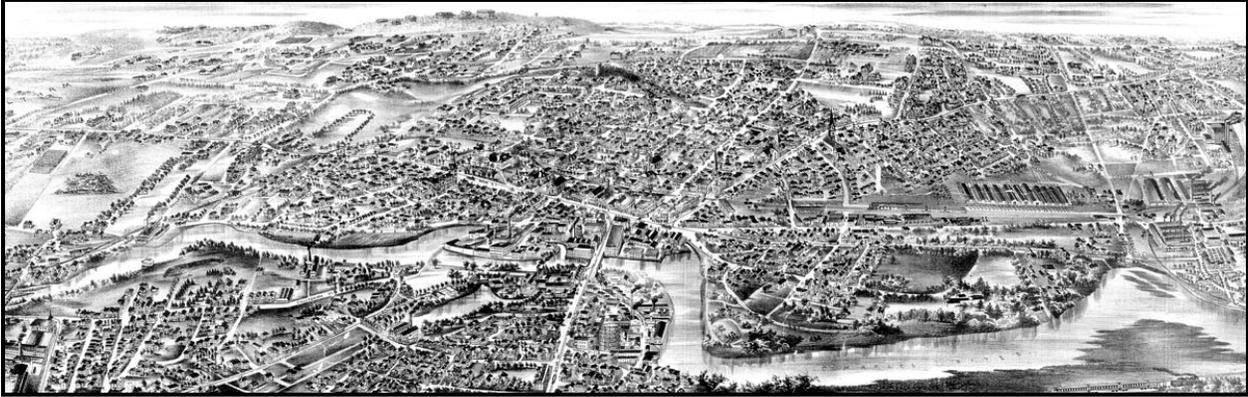


Figure 2 - Watertown, 1895

Other major industries included the Stanley Steamer Automobile Company, the world's first, and arguably most renowned, steam driven automobile which was a precursor to the modern internal combustion era of automobiles. The Hood Rubber Company (subsequently owned by B.F. Goodrich), located in East Watertown, was established in 1896 and operated until 1969. It served as a major supplier of rubber products throughout both the First and Second World Wars. At its height of operations in 1920, the Hood Rubber Company employed over ten thousand men and women, many of whom were immigrants from Armenia, Ireland, and Canada.

With a burgeoning industrial base, housing became a major concern in the early 20th century. Typical development patterns ensued in which industrial workers settled near the factories of East Watertown and the mills along Pleasant Street west of Watertown Square (see 1903 USGS Topographic Map). The northern and northwestern areas of town were developed from large estates, orchards, and farms, some of which dated back to the mid 1600's. One such estate located on Common Street Hill (also known as Strawberry Hill) was that of the Otis family of Boston; this estate was later renamed "The Oakley" for the numerous oak trees that dotted the estate's forty-five acres. Today the remnants of the Oakley estate are part of the Oakley Country Club, one of America's first golf courses.

Although most of the town's industries have long since departed, Watertown's housing arrangements continue to reflect the earlier socio-economic landscape of the past century. Larger homes and lots in the northern and northwestern segments of the Town give way to higher population density and more urban development as one moves from the northern border with Belmont to the southern and eastern edges that border on Cambridge and Newton where factories once operated.

More recently Watertown was chosen as the site of several high-tech industries such as Boston Scientific, a manufacturer of medical instruments and one of the largest employers in Watertown. In the early 2000's, several biotech and R&D firms also chose to locate in Watertown. Such industry settlements sparked hopes that Watertown might once again achieve industrial prominence, but no such pattern appears likely. Today, the majority of Watertown residents derive their incomes from non-industry related businesses outside the Town.

During the past 300 years, the Charles River along its length has changed from a bountiful aquatic habitat to a polluted waterway, damaged by former use as an open sewer for industrial and human

wastes. It was reborn as a “water parkway” in the late 1890's only to decline in the mid 20th century and then to be recently rediscovered as a regional recreational asset. In Watertown, industrial effluent began in the early 1800's with such industries as Lewando's Cleansing and Dying Company on Pleasant Street, Whitney Paper Mill on Morse Street, and the Aetna Mills on Bridge Street. Today, with most of Watertown's industries gone, effluent into the Charles continues to a much lesser degree from smaller sources like surface runoff, isolated spills, and improper sewer ties of households and municipal storm sewers. The river has begun to rebound with aquatic life, improved water quality ratings, and a significant return of recreational activities such as the annual “Run of the Charles”.

### C. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The population of Watertown in the 2000 Census, 32,986, represents a 4% decrease since 1980. Watertown's highest population was recorded in the mid-1960's (40,115) and has steadily decreased since then. Nevertheless, the population seems to have stabilized in recent years around 31,000 to 32,000. Within the 2000 estimate of 32,986, 91.4% were identified as White Non-Hispanic. Other ethnicities represented include 1.5% Black, 3.5% Asian, and 2.5% Hispanic. These populations have increased in the decade preceding the 2000 census by as much as 48% in the Asian population, with 16% in the Black and 25% in the Hispanic populations; while the White Non-Hispanic has decreased by 5.5%. The ancestral heritage of Watertown's population has undergone many changes since the original British Puritan exodus to America. Waves of Irish, Canadian, Italian, and Armenian immigration have all contributed to Watertown's heritage. The largest of these groups are Irish (23.1%) and Italian (19.7%) according to the 2000 census. Many Armenians, fleeing persecution of the Ottoman Empire of the early twentieth century, settled in Watertown and maintain the third largest Armenian population in the United States. Their history is recorded in the Armenian Library Museum at Watertown Square. Many early immigrants found work at the Hood Rubber Company and Arsenal of East Watertown and were able to set up residence in these areas. Today, Watertown's ethnic and ancestral heritage is evident with numerous community centers, churches, and markets with southeastern European and central Asian origins.

According to the 2000 census, Watertown's elderly population (over age 65) comprises approximately 16.7% of the Town's total population. Children (under age 19) comprise 16.5%. These populations changed significantly from 1990 to 2000 as the elderly population decreased by almost 20% and the children population increased by over 10%. Out of all households 12.4% had someone living alone who

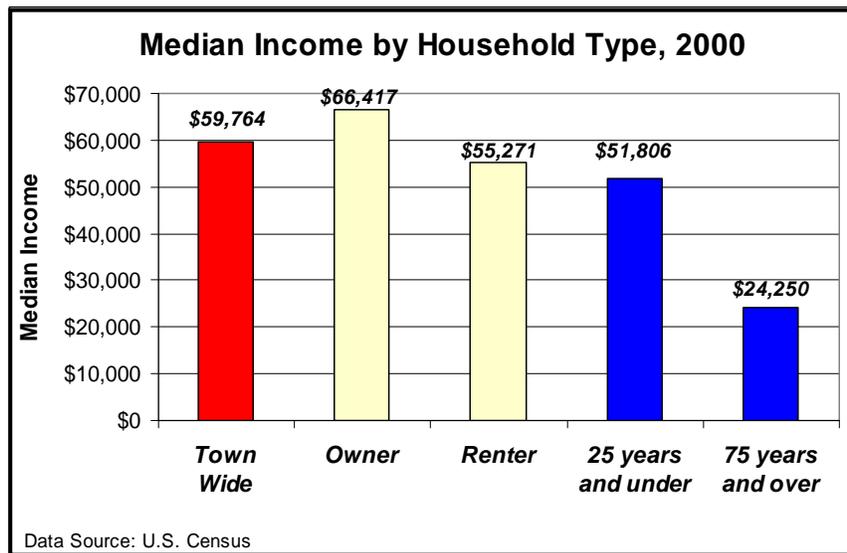


Figure 3 - Median Household Income by Type

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was 65 years of age or older. During the 1990's, the number of households grew by about 3%, as the average household size fell (source: MAPC). The population consisted of 37.9% married couples living together, with 49.9% being non-families. This could mean different programming in many of the Town's parks as its residents require different programming due to changes and family conditions.

In the year 2000 median household income in Watertown was \$59,764, a 4% increase from the \$57,299 in 1990, after being adjusted for inflation. This increase was ranked 137 among the 351 communities in the state, and is 18% above the state median income in year 2000. In the 1990's, Watertown actually increased adjusted median income, while the state decreased by almost 5%, a difference between the two of 9%. This may indicate a small amount of gentrification in some areas of the Town. Both state and Town median incomes made significant increases in the 1980's by an average 43%, adjusted for inflation. In 2000, about 5% of families and 6.3% of the population were considered below the poverty line. The income ranges can be seen across census block groups in the map, "Median Household Income".

The average population density of Watertown is 8,025 per square mile, though it varies significantly across its boundaries. In this statistic Watertown is about average in the Boston metro area but significantly higher than the state statistic of 809 per square mile (Massachusetts is the third highest density in the country). Although Watertown covers only 4.11 square miles, there

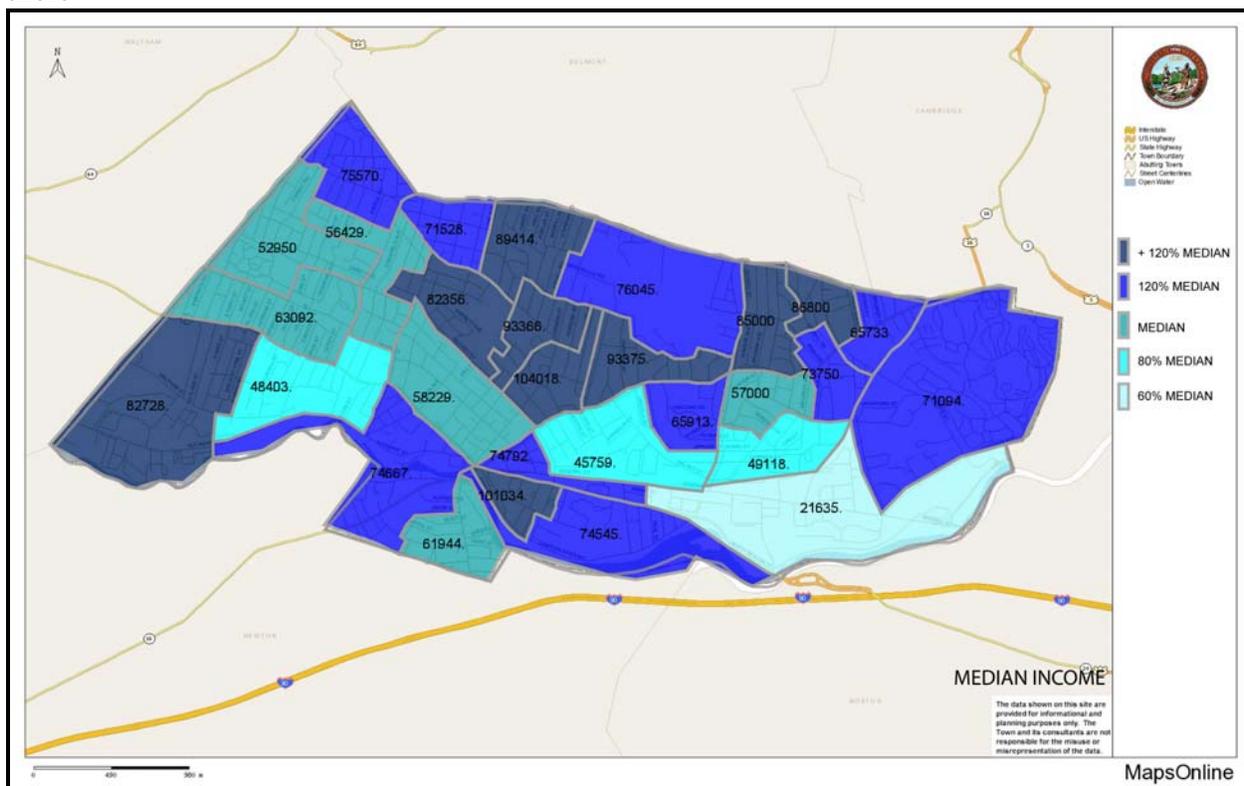


Figure 4 – Median Income

are several distinct neighborhoods as one moves from the highly dense East Watertown to the less dense and more affluent north central and northwestern sections of the town. According to the 2000 Census, there were a total of 15,008 housing units in Watertown, 14,629 of which are

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occupied. Forty-seven percent of all units are owner occupied. At the time of the census, the median value of owner occupied housing units was \$270,600, approximately 45% higher than the state average. Approximately 75% of housing units were built prior to 1960. As southern Watertown extends across the Charles River toward Newton, there is a complex mix of commercial and residential development. Century-old multi-family structures abutting commercial structures with inadequate parking are commonplace.

With a population of approximately 32,000, Watertown has a labor force of approximately 19-20 thousand, of which in the year 2000, approximately 2% were unemployed. This has risen in recent years. In 2005, Watertown had 1059 industries of which 1046 were privately held. This number has changed only moderately over the last decade. Of these the largest employment sectors was “Retail Trade” (15.8%) and “Professional and Technical Services” (12.9%). These two sectors comprised 29% of the employment in the Town while also providing an equal 29% of total wages. Other proportionately large employment sectors in the town included “Finance and Insurance” (8.7%), “Information” (8%), and Health Care” (7.7%). Manufacturing, at one point one of the highest, is continually decreasing over the years and was the 7<sup>th</sup> highest employment sector. Of the employed residents 25% worked in and commuted to Boston, 17% stayed in Watertown, 12% commuted to Cambridge, while the rest commuted to other adjacent communities.

### D. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Due to compact size of the Town at four square miles and the already dense development, there are very limited opportunities for new development. Nearly all development occurs as a result of a

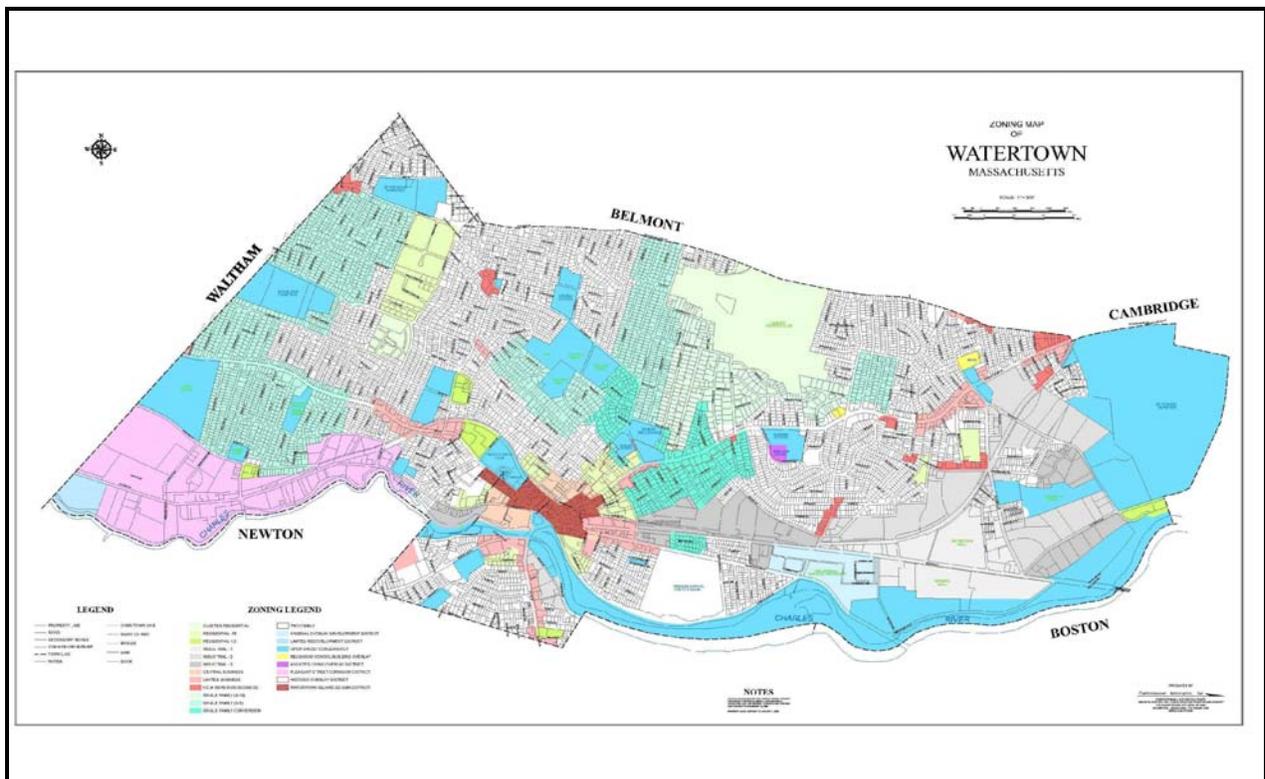


Figure 5 - Watertown Zoning

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reuse or rebuild of an existing structure. It is very difficult for the Town to mitigate constraints such as limited land availability and environmental concerns. Watertown's land use by zoning district consists of 56.6% residential, 5.2% business, 19.1% industrial and 19% open space/conservancy. Of Watertown's housing stock, 34% are single family, 24% are condominiums, 36% are two-family, 4% are three-family and 2% are apartments/complexes.

Since the 1996 plan, growth has been limited mostly to residential and commercial infill development, characterized by the removal of existing structures to facilitate structures of higher density. Typical intensification scenarios have taken place on lots that are zoned as two-family or multi-family, but have a single-family structure on the lot and are large enough to be subdivided; similar scenarios can be found in commercial properties. Since the 1996 plan, the Watertown Zoning Ordinance was changed to increase the lot size for new lots legally created after May 29,

1996 in the SC (Single Family Conversion) and T (Two-Family) zones. After that change was adopted, it was estimated that there would be fewer than 50 lots that would fit the criteria for redevelopment. Of these, many are unlikely to be re-developed due to other issues such as access, land use conflicts, and parking requirements.

The Town has been undertaking a process of self examination regarding development. A moratorium on the demolition of single family homes that are being replaced by larger homes and multi-family homes was explored by the Planning Board and Town Council, but not adopted. The issue remains controversial as limited private open space is further constricted by new developments that take full advantage of zoning dimensional standards such as setbacks and lot coverage. The Town also faces pressure to allow large residential developments that will change the face of existing private open space.

Presently the Town is conducting a comprehensive Zoning Ordinance revision that addresses conversion of single family dwellings to two family dwellings in the T zone, lot sizes, lot coverage

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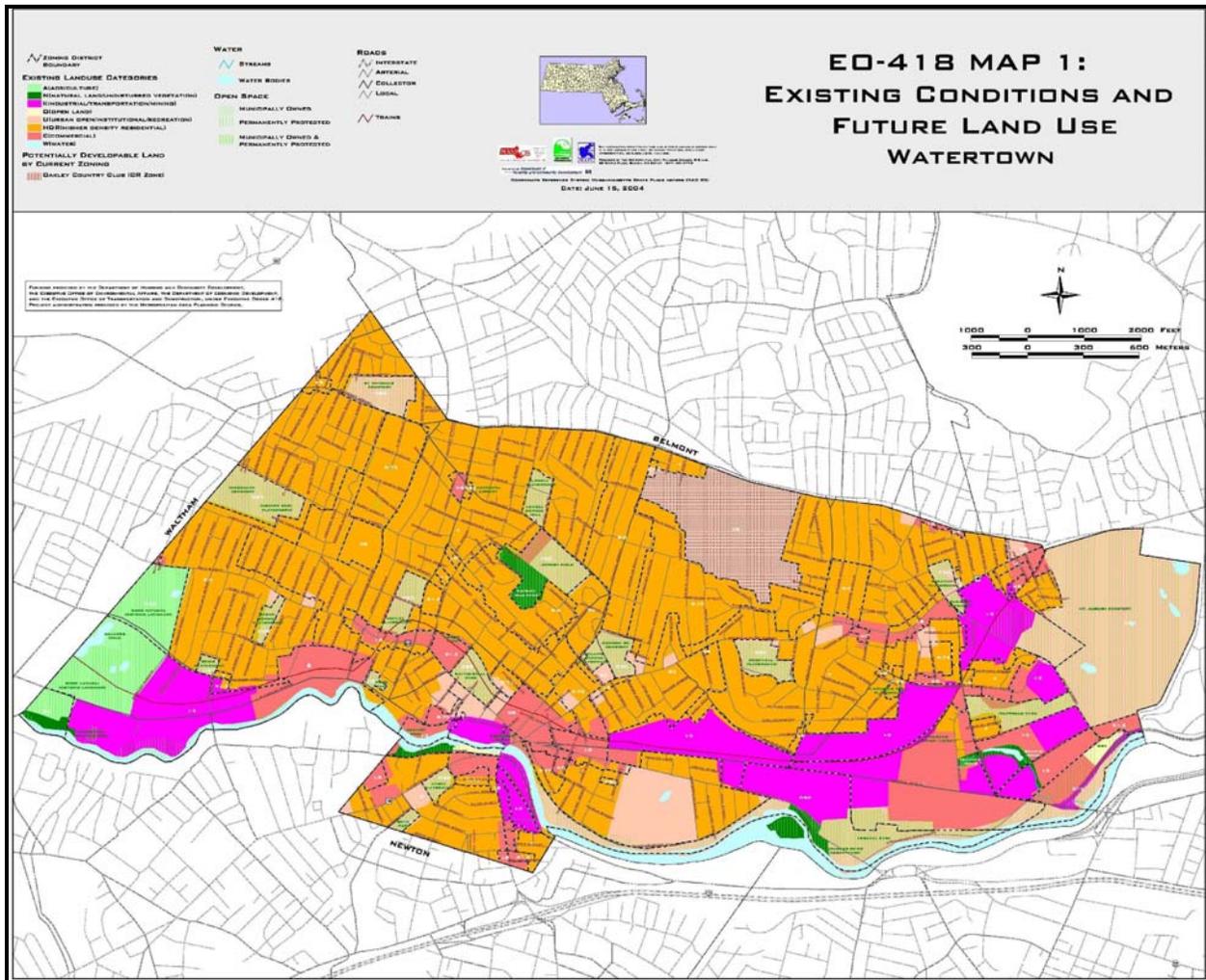


Figure 6 - EO-418 Map 1: Existing Conditions and Future Land Use and minimum open space. The process is controversial as the rights of property owners are weighed against the desire to restrict over-development and density.

Other growth and development-related topics since the 1996 update include a program that brought several hundred accessory apartment units into compliance with Massachusetts Building Code standards. The town began an extensive effort to identify illegal apartments in 1990. Apartment owners were provided a two-year amnesty program to allow them to apply for inspections and permits; and to legalize their units. At present Watertown does not allow new accessory apartments to be built or occupied if application was not made before January 1994. While the effect of this program is that the quantity of available apartment units has diminished and fewer apartments are being introduced to the market, the quality of the apartment stock is rising while the negative community impacts of improper parking arrangements is declining.

Watertown continues to experience economic expansion. Most recently a number of commercial sites are being renovated to house Research and Development and information technology uses. The redevelopment of the Army Arsenal has revitalized the Arsenal Street corridor. The Arsenal property was sold originally to a private developer who retrofitted the existing structures for commercial use. The property is now owned by Harvard University, which is maintaining existing

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businesses and has plans to add graduate school uses. The Department of the Interior granted seven acres of open space and the former base commandant's quarters to the town. This open space abuts the western edge of Arsenal Park and was incorporated into the existing park.

The General Services Administration (G.S.A.) site, once used by the Arsenal for waste storage, is located on Greenough Boulevard. At least some of this area is wetland and it is not clear whether any use besides wetlands and passive recreation is viable. This needs to be clarified. The Task Force is keenly interested in pursuing the G.S.A. site for wetland and recreational purposes. At present the Greenough Boulevard site is owned by the General Services Administration (G.S.A.) which is coordinating a clean-up of soil contamination (radiological and chemical). A portion of the site is classified as wetland and contains a perennial stream that feeds directly into the Charles River. Once clean-up of this site is completed, the land is expected to revert to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); the MDC master plan calls for a skating rink at the location but indications are that the site's hydrology would make it unsuitable and not conducive to that use. The Task Force recommends that the parcel be utilized for wetland, open space and passive recreational purposes, once the wetland status is determined.

The Buildout Analysis demonstrates that Watertown is essentially built out, however the buildout analysis found potential for considerable mixed use redevelopment in two underutilized areas: the Pleasant Street and Arsenal Street Corridors. In the former, the analysis found potential for 470 dwellings and 523,000 square feet of commercial space under existing zoning based on an assumption of 33% residents, 33% 5 floor office and 33% unchanged uses. For Arsenal Street, the assumed mix of 25% residential, 25% 5 floor office space/R&D and 50% unchanged yielded 250 dwellings and 279,000 square feet of commercial space.

The Pleasant Street area is being revitalized with the addition of new large residential developments. The area was rezoned in the late 1980's to an Industrial zone that permits residential uses by Special Permit.

### E. ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Town of Watertown has an older infrastructure system consisting of 72 miles of roadway, 80

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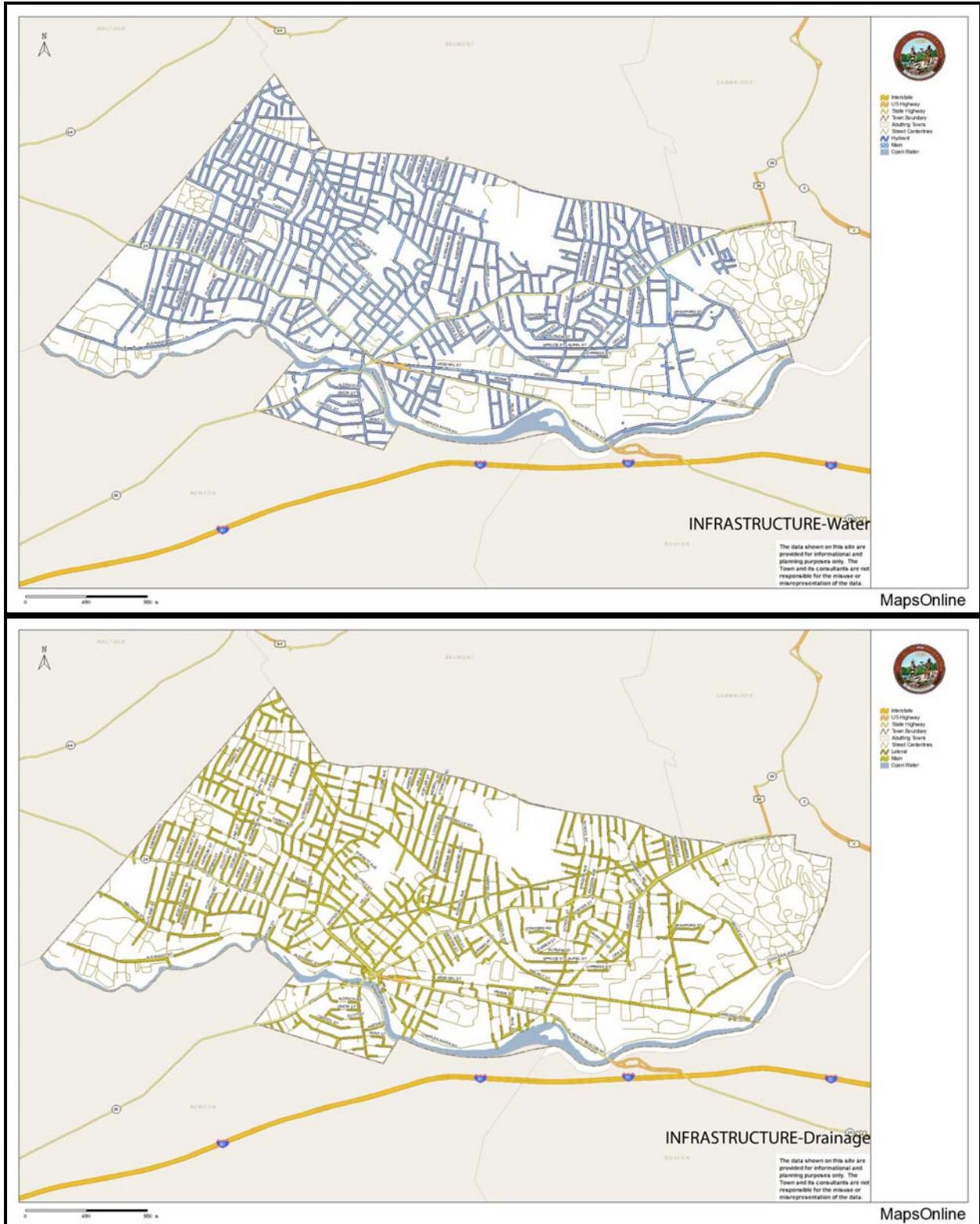


Figure 7 - Infrastructure - Water Distribution and Drainage Systems  
miles of water line, 82 miles of drain line, and 84 miles of sewer line. When development projects come before the Town, special attention is paid to the impact of the project on the infrastructure system, and mitigation is implemented where warranted.

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Watertown is well served by the MBTA's public bus system with a major bus terminal in Watertown Square, and several lines to Harvard Square and Newton Centre. There are several express routes into Boston. The town is also near the I-90 Mass Pike with an interchange at Galen Street, less than a mile from Watertown Square and the intersection of Mt. Auburn Street.

One of the Town's priorities in recent years has been the improvement of Pleasant Street and its adjacent uses. This has led to a revision in the corridor's zoning as well as 100% design development of the roadway that is currently waiting for state funding.

The Town proposed to reconstruct Pleasant Street in accordance with the Massachusetts Highway Department's (MHD) metric design standards. To provide for pedestrian safety, granite curbing will be installed and cement concrete sidewalks will be constructed or replaced throughout the project limits. Wheelchair ramps will be constructed in accordance with MHD standards and signing and pavement markings will be installed as prescribed. The drainage system will be improved by replacing structures and lateral connections as necessary and by adding structures at strategic locations. The estimate to construct the improvements is currently \$8,500,000. The project was programmed on the FY 2007 Transport Improvement Program (TIP) through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

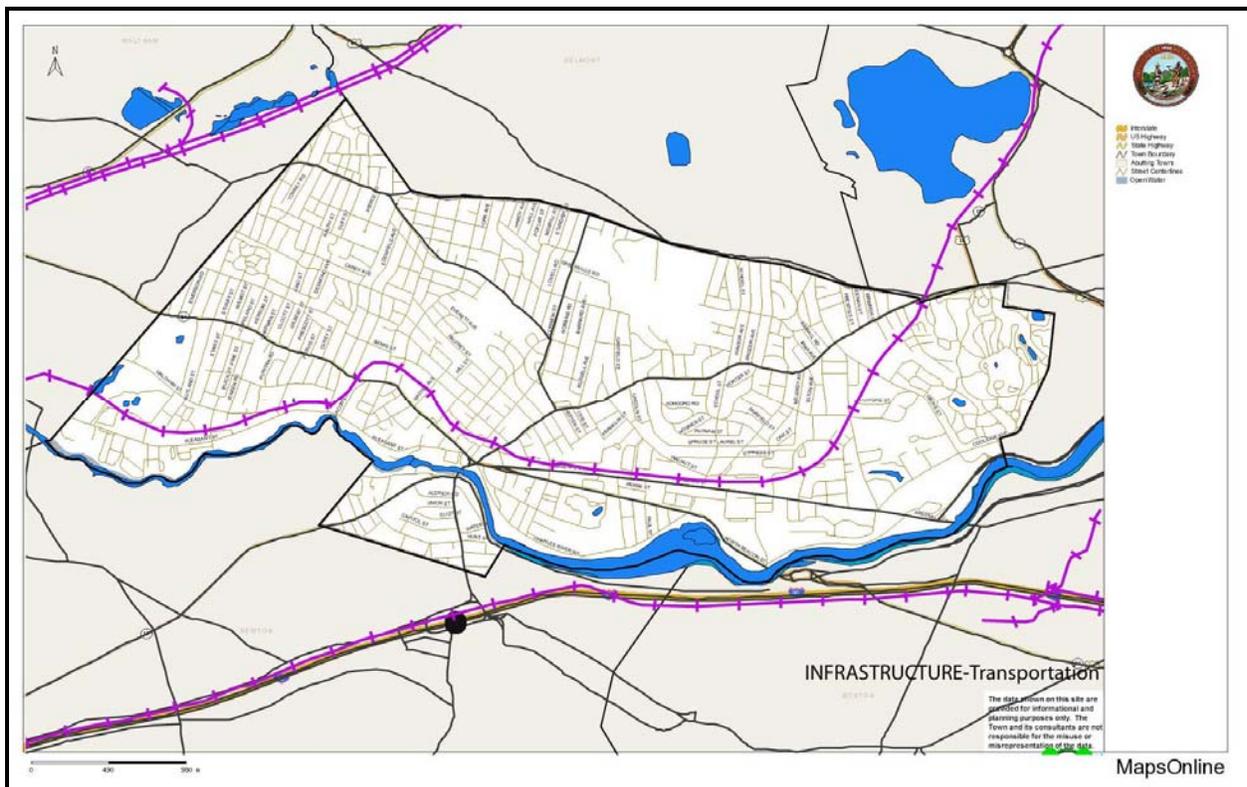


Figure 8 - Infrastructure – Transportation Systems

The Pleasant Street Visioning and Planning Study assisted the community in clarifying goals and aspirations for this important corridor prior to adopting specific Zoning requirements and implementing substantial land use change. The Town hired Sasaki & Associates as its consultant to develop a framework for development and improve decision-making going forward. Due to the

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large number of stakeholders and the community-wide significance of this area, this process provided an opportunity to debate the advantages and disadvantages of different directions before they happen and to forge a shared vision. The interests of the Town, property owners, existing businesses, new investors, abutters and nearby residents and civic groups were solicited and incorporated into the final recommendations of the study. The Department is currently developing the Zoning recommendations associated with the plan and is continuing to work with the Town Council to implement the recommendations within the study.

The School system is at near capacity. There have been some declining levels of school enrollment over the past few years; however during the past year, the School Department has reported more children moving into town and into the school system.

## SECTION 4 - ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

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### A. GEOLOGY, SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

Watertown's 4.11 square miles (2,630.4 acres) are located in an area known geologically as the "Boston Basin", as is most of the Boston Metropolitan Region. The Boston Basin extends south to Weymouth, north to Medford and west to Weston. The basin is a faulted and folded terrain that extends northeasterly in Massachusetts Bay. The basin is characterized by the Cambrian Age rock formations, Cambridge Argillite and Roxbury Conglomerate. Much of Watertown is underlain by the Cambridge Argillite. The Roxbury Conglomerate outcrops extensively in Newton and the Roxbury section of Boston. Both the Cambridge Argillite and Roxbury Conglomerate have been intruded by igneous dikes and interbedded with volcanic ash from the Brighton Volcanic Complex and Lynn Volcanics.

Topographically, elevations range from 220 feet near the Oakley Country Club to less than 10 feet along the banks of the Charles River. Several prominent hills (e.g., Whitney Hill, Strawberry Hill, and Coolidge Hill) dot the landscape and provide some excellent views of the river basin below and the Boston skyline to the east. Geologically, these hills are drumlins and are composed of large mounds of glacial till (i.e., clay and rock) formed as the glaciers reshaped the landscape some 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. As the glaciers moved across New England, much land in coastal areas was pushed below sea level by the glacier's massive weight. The bedrock below the glacial till is the result of the erosion of a high mountain range that existed 350 million years ago to the west of the Boston Basin

The general topography has remained much the same since the glaciers and subsequent sea level changes occurred several thousand years ago. It would be erroneous, however, to suggest that humans have not any significant impact on the post-glacial landscape. Indeed, damming of the Charles River to harness water-power for the burgeoning industrial base of the mid to late 19th century has changed its course and altered the character of this river. No longer is it the swift-moving waterway of yesteryear. Nor are large wetlands present to provide natural flood buffers or filtration of surface runoffs back into the river. Human modifications to the land include dense residential development, paving, filling, and grading for construction and transportation. The only areas that have not been altered from the original post-glacial topography are those in which the slope is too steep to grade or the substrate too difficult to manipulate, such as Whitney Hill.

Watertown's surficial geology is composed mainly of deposits left behind by the glaciers of the last ice age, sedimentation from upland areas, and post-glacial sea level changes. Today, much of the Town can be classified as "urban land complex" (bituminous or concrete pavement) and loamy sand. Once, the alluvial soils along the banks of the Charles River provided the basis for a well established agricultural community to thrive. Today, the last vestiges of this agricultural community exist only at the Gore Estate.

A general soils map has been completed with the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service

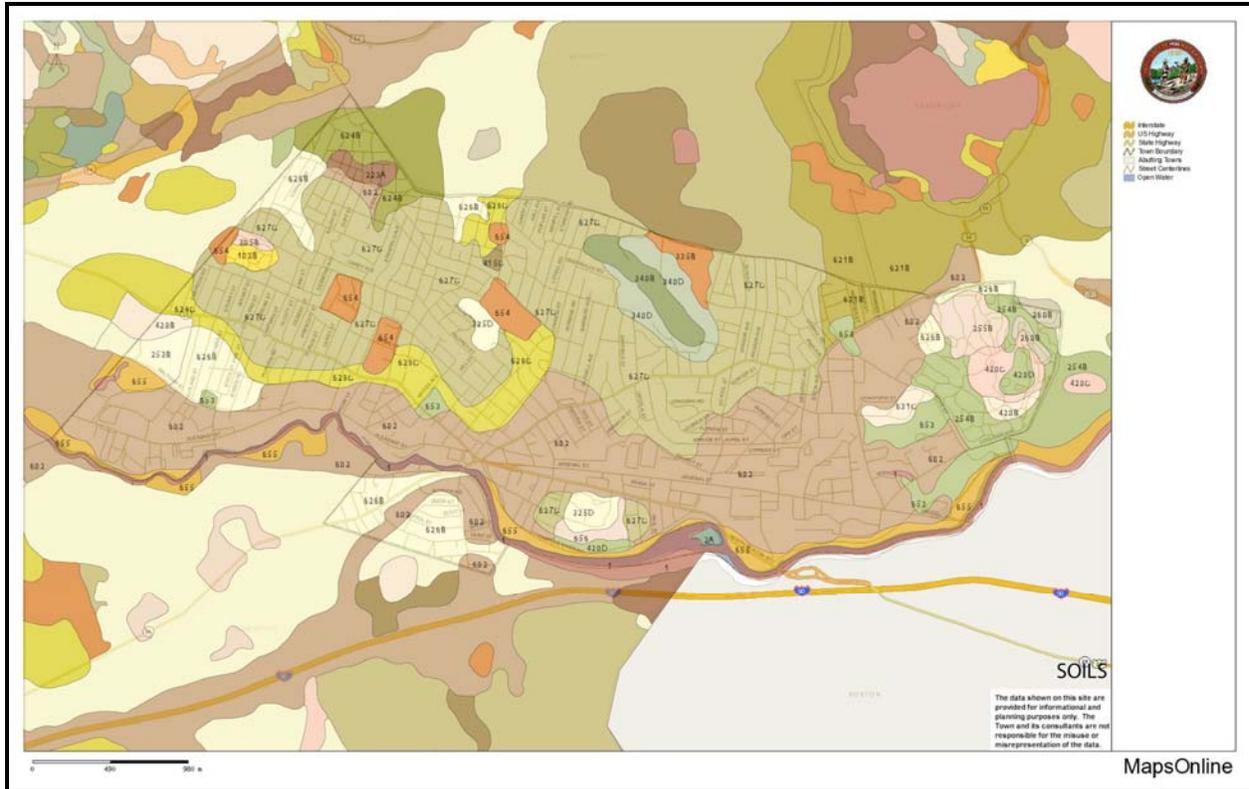


Figure 9 - Soil Types

(S.C.S.). As evident on the Soils Map, Watertown has been highly urbanized leaving very little in the way of viable agricultural soils. Much of the wetland soil along the Charles River has been filled and built upon during the later part of the 19th century, although a significant band of wetlands remain along the Charles River on property owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

## B. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The landscape of Watertown can best be described as dense suburban and urban. There are, however, several scenic jewels among the many of the heavily-developed neighborhoods. Of primary note is, of course, the Charles River which winds along the town's southern boundary. The DCR walkway along the Charles River west of Watertown Square provides scenic vistas for pedestrians and bicyclists and has enabled increased access to the Town's most valuable natural resource.

Several prominent hills provide vistas of the Boston skyline. The hill and tower (136') at Mt. Auburn Cemetery provides not only a spectacular vista but is situated amid Watertown's largest expanse of semi-public open space. Several footpaths meander throughout the vast well-kept grounds providing a pleasant walk for visitors. Views of the Boston skyline can also be seen along Coolidge Hill Road. At the peaks of Palfrey Street there are excellent semi-urban vistas of the hills and valleys to the immediate west, into Waltham. The Oakley Country Club also provides excellent views.

### C. WATER RESOURCES

Watertown is mostly within the Charles River Watershed with the exception of an area approximately 1000' deep along the northern boundary with Belmont. The Charles River forms most of Watertown's southern boundary and is considered a major part in the town's quality of open space. Indeed, as Watertown's name suggests, the connection with the Charles has played a prominent role in Watertown's rich history. Today, improved water quality has spurred an increase in recreational water sports such as rowing, sailing, fishing and canoeing; though this section of the river is still not clean enough for swimming. Storm water Management is a critical response that is important to the future success and vitality of the Charles River and is practiced and implemented with current and proposed development of infrastructure projects.

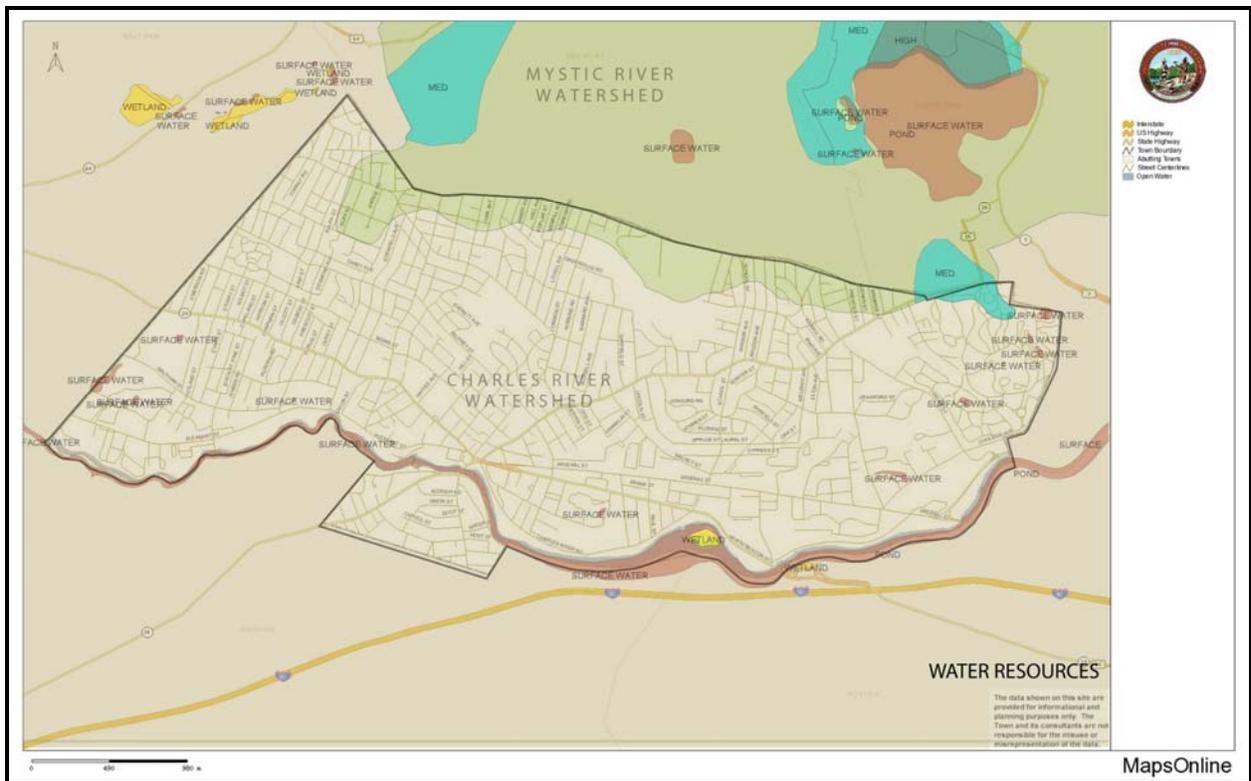


Figure 10 - Water Resources

Although Watertown relies on the Metropolitan Water Resource Authority (MWRA), for its potable water supply, well water was once plentiful and provided both drinking water and also irrigation for agricultural ventures. Artesian springs near Whitney Hill were noted in historic journals and were used for irrigation for pear groves along Orchard Street. Because the town no longer depends on groundwater for its sustenance, systematic ground-water testing has not been conducted. The extent to which groundwater has been affected by land use changes and/or industrial/ residential pollution over the past several centuries is not fully known, but testing at the Arsenal site showed significant contamination in that area.

Besides the Charles River, surface water is limited to nine small ponds. Three of the nine ponds

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

are located on the grounds of Mt. Auburn Cemetery. All of the ponds are privately owned. Sawin's Pond, Williams Pond and the ponds at the Perkins School and the Gore Estate are not accessible to the public. Most natural springs were incorporated long ago into the municipal storm drains; no systematic, town-wide mapping of these springs exists. Adjacent to the southern boundary there are several areas along the Charles River that pose 100-year flood hazards. The majority of potentially affected lands occur west of the Watertown Dam with four areas each several acres in size between Bacon Street and Paramount Place. The site of the Stop & Shop at the western end of Pleasant Street is 11 acres that are entirely within the 100-year floodplain. The eastern section of the Charles River is contained within its banks with the exception of the open space along Greenough Boulevard north of Arsenal Street. There are no other documented flood hazards in the town.

There are several areas of wetland conditions in Watertown. Williams Pond, on the western edge of town between Waltham Road and Pleasant Street, and Sawins Pond, in east Watertown at Arlington Street and Coolidge Road, are the two largest concentrations and both are privately owned. There are two isolated and relatively small areas of wetland conditions associated with the Charles River; the first being an unnamed island along the Charles River at Charles River Road and Beacon Street; and the other on the border of Watertown and Boston at the North Beacon Street Bridge. Virtually any activity that occurs in a wetland Resource Area is subject to the state as well as town wetlands protection requirements. This includes any removal, filling, dredging or alteration of the Resource Area. (There are rare exceptions.) In addition, activities that occur in a Buffer Zone surrounding the Resource Area (100 ft. under the state requirements, 150 ft. under the Watertown ordinance) are subject to requirements if they will alter the Resource Area. The town ordinance also dictates that there is no-build within 150' of the Resource Area. Even activities outside the Buffer Zone could become subject to requirements if they do alter a Resource Area.

Although the town has no known endangered or threatened species, it is believed that the town has at least one vernal pool at the Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Vernal pools which collect water from rain or seasonal flooding, dry up in the later spring and early summer. They provide essential habitat for several species. It is suspected that there may also be undocumented vernal pools near the ponds in the west end of Watertown.

### D. VEGETATION

There are no rare, threatened or endangered species within the borders of Watertown. Most of Watertown's surface consists of "urban complex" (pavement) and therefore precludes the presence of large tracts of woodlands and species associated with forested areas. Original forests were cleared of all trees long ago with the exception of isolated areas such as the Oakley Country Club where several oak trees are thought to date back to America's colonial era. The trees that dot Watertown's yards, streets, and parks are the result of plantings or natural pollination of species atop areas previously cleared for agriculture or pastures. For the most part, Watertown's contiguous woodland vegetation is limited to the Charles River basin, primarily within the DCR's network of open space. Common native hardwoods include red maple, white oak, hickory, birch, and black oak. Softwood species include white pine and hemlock. Closer to the river's shore there are numerous species of fern near the forest floor as well as cattail stands towards the far western and eastern borders of the town. Common herbaceous plants include vervain, goldenrod, asters

and joe pye weed. Whitney Hill Park, the only large remnant of forested land, has approximately 6.1 forested acres with species such as beech, sassafras, white pine, hickory, white oak and maple-leaved viburnum. There are also invasive species such as Norway maple, buckthorn, garlic mustard and euonymus.

Many trees line the town's streets, deltas, and parks. Presently tree maintenance is conducted by the Parks Division. The median life span of an urban tree is approximately ten years, thus necessitating continual tree management and replacement. The former Tree Warden modified the mix of tree species in Town in response to the amount of road salt used during the winter. The Task Force recommends that the Town explore reducing salt use to the extent that is compatible with public safety, in order to minimize impacts on trees. At present the Town is proceeding with a proposal to have all publicly owned street trees mapped into the town's G.I.S along with pertinent data such as species, size, health, etc. Once completed, the tree database will be used to forecast and coordinate tree replacement, requests and maintenance as well as assist in identifying trends that affect the long-term health of the town's stock of urban forest.

The grounds of Mt. Auburn Cemetery cover an area of 175 acres and offer an abundance of flora both indigenous and exotic. The grounds were acquired in 1831 by the Massachusetts Horticulture Society for the creation of an arboretum and were later developed as America's first garden cemetery. Ninety-four percent of the cemetery lies within Watertown.

### E. FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

Watertown is located in the Boston Eco-region comprised of low hills and outlying hilly suburban towns. The basin itself has low rolling topography and numerous urban reservoirs, lakes, and ponds. The flat areas were once tilled, but are now almost exclusively urban and suburban developments. Because Watertown is a mostly developed community there leaves little room for larger parcels of land required for many habitats. As of May 2006, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program has not identified any endangered or threatened species within Watertown although there have been sightings of spotted salamanders, a species on the state watch list. This species breed in vernal pools and spend there adult lives in any surrounding upland forest. The Mt. Auburn Cemetery area contains the appropriate habitat, although very few salamanders have been documented.

Species such as salmon once swam up the Charles River to spawn providing an integral component to the area's seasonal wildlife cycles. With the damming of the river some of these indigenous aquatic species vanished and with them numerous related species. Today the river's fish populations above the Watertown Dam include (but are not limited to) Alewife, Herring, Yellow Perch, American Eel, and Banded Sunfish. The Watertown Dam which crosses the Charles River just west of the Galen Street crossing was built sometime in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century and was used for industry that later developed along the river corridor. The latest version of the dam is still intact and contains a fish ladder that allows native Alewife, Herring and other fish to cross and extend their habitat upstream.

### F. SCENIC RESOURCES AND UNIQUE ENVIRONMENTS

Watertown is situated in the center of Boston Basin, a geographic bowl extending from the

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Arlington Heights in the north to the Blue Hills to the south. This area is defined by a rim of hard rock hills and full of drumlins, the smooth hills formed from deposits of glacial till, that were left from glaciers millions of years ago. Watertown has several drumlins including Mt Auburn in the cemetery from whose tower can be seen the Charles River Valley; and Prospect Hill at 400' from which can be viewed the Boston skyline, and Harbor. Whitney Hill is another drumlin that maintains a 6-acre park of the same name which includes the most heavily forested section of Watertown.

There is no Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (D.C.R.) designated scenic landscapes in Watertown. However, the Town is adjacent to the Charles River and is host to several unique man-made landscapes.

The Charles River is a regional historic, environmental, and recreation resource. The river is far from pristine, but the presence of a regional waterway through this community offers a significant number of scenic and historic landscapes. The Charles River Bikeway, which extends into Boston, provides relatively untouched areas of riverbank as it passes through Watertown. There are many areas east of the Watertown Dam where pedestrians and bike riders enjoy river ecosystems that have multiplied since the demise of local industry, as well as intermittent views to downtown Boston. The placid waters in this stretch of the river offer a pastoral experience available in few other urban centers. Dominating views in this area is the 38-acre Perkins School campus with its Campus Gothic style of architecture and its 180' tower and belfry. This is also the site of the former Watertown Arsenal, a 93-acre facility with a collection of large early 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century warehouses designed in the Federal style by Alexander Parris, architect of the Quincy Market buildings. It was in recent years renovated into an office complex and shopping mall with adjacent community open space. The arsenal is home to the Commander's Mansion, an impressive three-story brick Bracketed style mansion which is used for events and meetings. The building is on the National Registry of Historic Places and, with the manicured Olmstead designed landscape, provides a significant scenic presence to the adjacent park and local area. The river bikeway to the west of the dam provides similar scenic quality in some locations, but is subject to more variety; the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Aetna Mill complex, which has been renovated into office and lab space, is almost dominated by the presence of dilapidated late century warehouses and small industrial uses. This area provides the most opportunity for economic revitalization, open space enhancement, and future connections to the river.

Within Watertown's boundaries are three privately owned but regionally recognized landscapes, The Gore Estate, Oakley Country Club, and the Mount Auburn Cemetery that, in a relatively dense city, also serve as large swaths of open landscape providing scenery, as well as the ecological benefits of permeable surface, local habitat, sunlight, and air circulation.

The Gore Estate straddles the border of Watertown and Waltham and was the 19<sup>th</sup> century estate of Massachusetts Governor Christopher Gore. The property includes a small farm with an elegantly furnished mansion considered by architectural historians to be the most significant Federal period mansion in New England. The grounds of the estate lands were developed with respect to the contemporary ideas of Sir Humphrey Repton, one of the last great English Landscape Architects; in an informal fashion with broad lawns, open fields, ponds, clumps of trees, and inconspicuous gardens. It is this area of Town that is in need of and offers the most

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opportunity for expanded large scale open space. Adjacent to the Gore Place property are large swaths of land that once served as manufacturing and industrial purposes, are visually blighted, and serve as large parking areas. These parcels, mostly to the south, could some day be converted to much needed open space and scenic landscape. This would also serve to connect the northwest part of Watertown to the Charles River both visually and programmatically.

The Oakley Country Club was founded in 1898 on the grounds of the Otis Family Estate; Harrison Otis was the Mayor of Boston for three consecutive terms. The estate was later known for its wide variety of imported trees and shrubs; however the estate got its name from the abundance of local oak trees in the vicinity, some estimated to be nearly 800 years old. The Oakley was one of the first golf courses in the country.

Mt. Auburn Cemetery is a National Historic Landmark is located mostly in Watertown but shares its borders between Watertown and Cambridge. Founded in 1831, it was the first large-scale designed landscape in the United States that was open to the public. It is credited as the beginning of the American public parks and gardens movement and set the style for other suburban American cemeteries. The cemetery is 174 acres and is important for both its historical aspects and its role as an arboretum. Mount Auburn has a massive and renowned collection of over 5,500 trees and includes nearly 700 species and varieties. Thousands of maintained shrubs and herbaceous plants thrive among the cemetery's hills, ponds, woodlands, and clearings. The cemetery contains more than 10 miles (17 km) of roads and many paths.

Watertown has many historic resources many of which have been maintained and renovated for contemporary commercial and residential uses. The Mount Auburn Street Historic District was established by the Town of Watertown in 2002 under the Watertown Historic District Ordinance. The purpose of the Historic District is to preserve the distinctive architecture reflecting the character of Watertown's rich cultural, social, economic and political history.

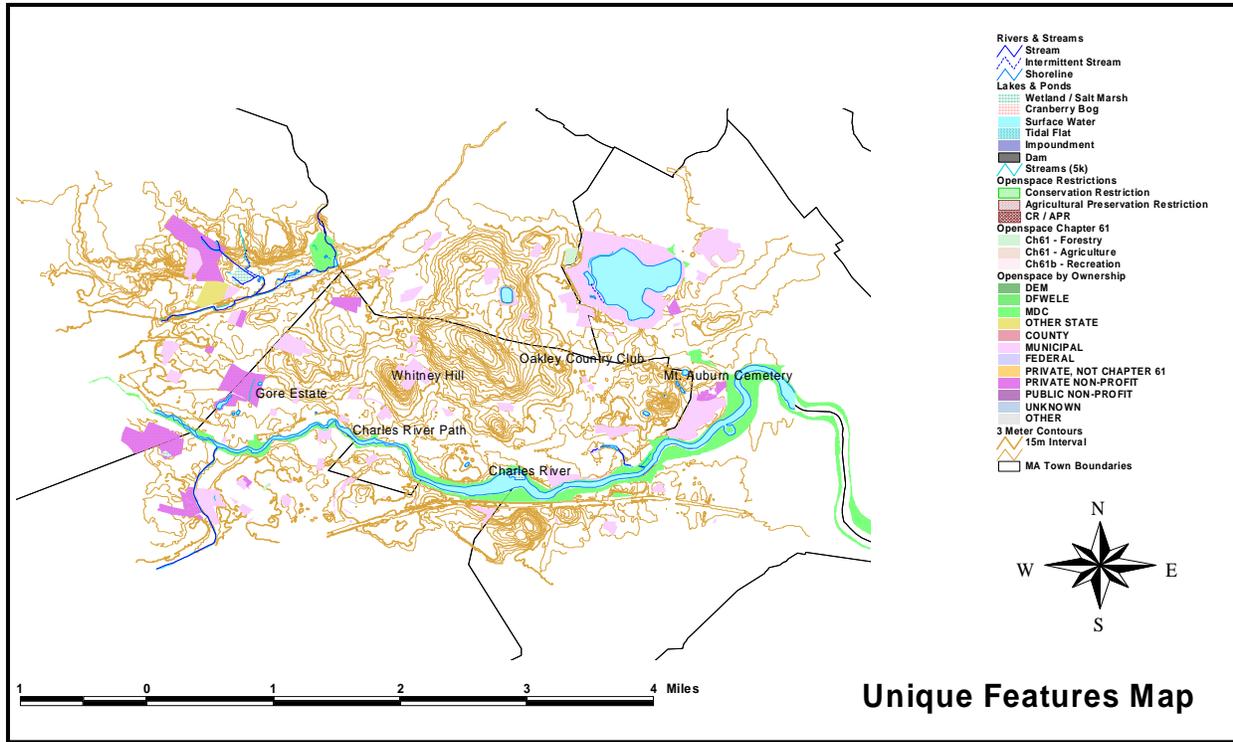


Figure 11 – Unique Features Map

## G. ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

The most significant environmental challenges that Watertown faces in the next five years are primarily those of hazardous waste sites and development pressure. The Town has been urbanized for the last 100 years and is now, as many communities in the northeast, faced with opportunities for open space but also new development as entire industry sectors transform from market pressures. The southern area of town primarily along the once industrious Charles River are now constantly under pressure to be developed but also facing significant hurdles in environmental compliance.

### Hazardous Waste Sites

The GSA site located along the Charles River in the southeastern corner of town is considered to be one of the more contaminated parcels in the area. Presently still owned by the Federal Government, it was used as a dumping ground for the U.S Arsenal located across Arsenal Street from the site. The Commonwealth has been pursuing purchasing the site based on the environmental compliance needed to be fulfilled by the state, and conveying it to the DCR to be used as open space. The parcel is over 10 acres in size.

### Landfills

There are currently no landfills in Watertown. Filippello Park in East Watertown was once a dump and was capped and converted to open space.

### Erosion

NA

### **Chronic Flooding**

There is considerably seasonal flooding that occurs along the basins and low areas of the Charles River. This is mostly along the areas that were once very industrial and now stand to contain the most contaminants. As these sites are cleaned and redeveloped, Watertown will be looking for strategies to resolve not only Brownfield conditions but water retention and low impact as well.

### **Sedimentation**

NA

### **Development Impact**

Watertown has seen significant development pressure in recent years as other communities in the Boston metro area start to approach limits on developable land. Once considered untouchable due to environmental compliance constraints, Pleasant Street along the Charles River has seen considerable redevelopment of its warehouses and empty parcels. The Corridor is poised to absorb more development in the coming years as zoning and environmental constraints are resolved. Another parcel in the center of town is the Whitney Hill area. Whitney Hill consists of approximately 6 acres of natural wooded forest surrounded by residential neighborhood. The town has only recently determined property ownership but is still faced with portions of the site that could be developed as parking or other uses if not fully protected.

## SECTION 5 - INVENTORY OF LANDS - CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST

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### A. INTRODUCTION

According to many of the early American landscape visionaries, and expressed well by Frederick Law Olmstead, parks are not amenities; they are necessities. Parks provide recreation, inspiration, and essential respite from the city's hardscape, bright lights, perpetual traffic, and blaring noises. Parks should be available to all residents, especially those who do not have the resources to escape to other places. This was expressed more than a century ago and is still very much if not more relevant today.

Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they practice healthier lifestyles. Beyond the obvious benefits of exercise, a growing body of research shows that contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health. The provision of green space in urban areas provides substantial environmental benefits. Trees reduce air-pollution and water pollution, help to keep cities cooler, and are an effective means to manage storm water runoff and erosion; and most parks, even in urban areas, consist primarily of pervious surfaces. City parks also produce important social and community development benefits. Studies have also shown that parks and open space increase the value of neighboring residential properties. Similar benefits occur on commercial property value; the availability of park and recreation facilities is an important quality of life factor for corporations choosing where to locate facilities.

In many ways communities assume parks will always be there, and unfortunately they are typically taken for granted. But perspectives are changing as the sensitivity to overdeveloped land and resources, as well as increased pressures on lifestyles and family is brought to the fore. In 2000, 80 percent of Americans were living in metropolitan areas, up from 48 percent in 1940. The nature of urban communities is changing with respect to diversity of population, the definition of space, including the built environment, and how the two interact. The emerging workforce is not entering the profession with the same values as the now retiring workforce. In many communities, especially the inner core towns like Watertown, reduction of personal green space, such as lawns and backyards, is leading to more perceived value on local parks and recreation settings. More Watertown residents are expecting programmed and usable open space, as well as natural spaces, to be provided for themselves, their children and their pets; many of these uses being incompatible and requiring careful planning and design. And the scarce availability of land puts an enormous onus on identifying strategic lands and planning for acquisition years before actual implementation.

The increased costs for land acquisition, development, environmental cleanup, green building, and maintenance have placed a strain on creating new parks that will meet today's standards of useful and responsible application, i.e. green and sustainable. Towns are usually left to upgrade and maintain existing parks, many of them unable to meet the demands of an increasing population and higher residential densities. And the responsibilities in maintaining the land for future generations are relentlessly met with the pressures of incoming and usually needed economic and residential development. Many cities and towns have adopted cost saving methods

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associated with sustainable public parks and recreation. The use of natural systems that can be easily and efficiently maintained will be more valuable as energy and material costs rise. Sustainability will be imperative for parks and recreation and should serve as models of development employing best industry practices.

Watertown has borrowed some common principles from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) that will allow a community like this, with diverse backgrounds and interests, to collectively agree on a common direction in achieving a desirable park, recreation and open space system. An important reason for maintaining these principles is to encourage communication and collaboration in seeking a unified approach toward implementation. These principals ensure that there is a balance between the interest of the public and private sectors; indoor and outdoor opportunities and the management of space, services and facilities. They serve as a broad baseline for the more specific Goals and Objectives that are explained in Chapter 8. These principles include:

1. All people should have access to activities and facilities regardless of interest, age, sex, income, cultural background, housing environment or handicap.
2. Public recreation should be coordinated with other community recreation opportunities to avoid duplication and encourage innovation.
3. Public recreation must be integrated with all other public services, such as education, health, water, light and roads.
4. Facilities should be adaptable to future requirements.
5. Facilities and programs should be financially feasible at all stages of development; the operation and maintenance places a greater financial burden on the municipality than the initial capital cost; more facilities require more staff.
6. Citizens should be involved in this planning process throughout all stages.
7. Planning should be a continuous process, involving constant evaluation of the recommendations and continuous effort in protecting existing lands and increasing current inventory.
8. Local, regional and state plans should be integrated.

The Executive Office of Environmental Affairs as expressed in the requirements for the Open Space Planner's Workbook promotes the retention of open space for conservation and recreational purposes. Beyond the general requirements, however, no specific standards have been established. Rather, it has been left to the local governments to decide how much land should be set aside as open space. The NRPA has established definitions for recreational land necessary to serve a given population. These definitions are oriented largely toward metropolitan areas. For example, a "neighborhood park" as defined by the NRPA would serve a population of up to 5,000 people. Therefore, as NRPA advised, Watertown established its own standards tailored to the unique characteristics of the Town, rather than adopt the guidelines verbatim.

These definitions are as follows:

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Orientation	Function	Space, Design & Service Area	Example
Home oriented space	Should meet aesthetic qualities and accommodate informal activities of an active and passive nature, i.e. sitting, reading, gardening, sunning, children's play and family activity	Varies according to housing type; immediately adjacent or within 200 feet of each dwelling unit	Front and back yards, driveways, sidewalk, porch, balconies, workshops, play rooms, recreation rooms
Sub-neighborhood space or Connector	Especially important in high density areas, providing visual relief and aesthetic qualities for similar activities to those mentioned above, as well as meeting areas for small informal groups, walking, jogging and dog walking	Must be visually accessible; varies from 500 square feet to 1 acres; designed to be as flexible as possible; will serve an area of 100 yards to ¼ mile radius	Vacant lots, cul-de-sacs, boulevards, green belts, walkways, trails, play lots, rest areas, and vest-pocket parks.
Neighborhood space	Should accommodate neighborhood interest preferences; may include sports areas for minor leagues, outdoor skating rinks, water play as well as special events and informal passive activities	Space should be associated with an elementary school; varies from 1 to 20 acres; will serve 5,000 people within an area of ¼ mile radius	Neighborhood parks or park-school combinations play fields for baseball, soccer and football; adventure playgrounds, wading pools, neighborhood centers
Community space	Should accommodate social, cultural, educational and physical activities of particular interest to the community; multi-purpose, year round, day/night activities; low level competitive sports with limited spectator space	Space should be associated with a secondary school; varies from 5 to 20 acres; will serve several neighborhoods or 15,000 to 25,000 people within a radius of ½ to 1 ½ miles; accessible by walking, cycling and public transit	Community park or park-school combinations; facilities for playgrounds, recreation centre, meeting rooms and library; track and field areas, sports fields, arena and swimming pool
City-wide or urban space	Should provide specialized facilities for the use of a wide segment of populations; will accommodate the preservation of unique historical, cultural or natural areas	Parks can be 5 to 200 acres; accessible to all residents by private and public transportation; should not exceed ½ hour driving time; should be linked to other open space	Major city parks and areas left in their natural state; beaches, trails, and picnic areas; fair grounds, civic centers and major sports facilities
Regional space	Specialized areas for conservation and preservation of naturalized resources; usually involves more time-consuming activities, i.e. day-long picnics and family camping	Up to 500 acres or more, serving two or more municipalities; if possible accessible by public transportation; within 20 miles or 1 hour driving of high density areas	Conservation areas, botanical gardens, regional and provincial parks; wild life sanctuaries and naturalized reserves; scenic drives and waterway systems; air fields, ski areas, zoos and museums

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There are approximately 115 acres of public owned and publicly accessible open space distributed across the town. That is 3.6 acres per 1000 persons, significantly less than what has been considered a standard of 10 acres per 1000 persons (NRPA standard). And NRPA has recently established a new set of guidelines with an approach that is redefining this old notion of a national standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people, and which is now generally recognized as lacking in today's recreation and open space environment. In short, according to this comparison, Watertown is deficient in the national standard for quantity of open space. Even considering the extensive amount of DCR land (50+ acres) along the Charles River, Watertown still falls short, as do many communities in the inner core of metro Boston.

The majority of open space in Watertown is privately owned and only half of that is publicly accessible; this includes 281 acres of open space contained within Mt. Auburn Cemetery, The Gore Estate, and the Oakley Country Club, the last of which contains 80 acres with access limited exclusively to members only. The other two are private holdings but open to the public during scheduled hours. This private open space is limited in access, but also provides other benefits to the community including vast amounts of permeable and vegetative land that supports wildlife and vegetative ecologies, open terrain for better microclimates and air circulation, and scenic landscapes. The Oakley Country Club is also protected by the Chapter 61b recreational land program which offers the Town the right of first refusal to purchase the land.

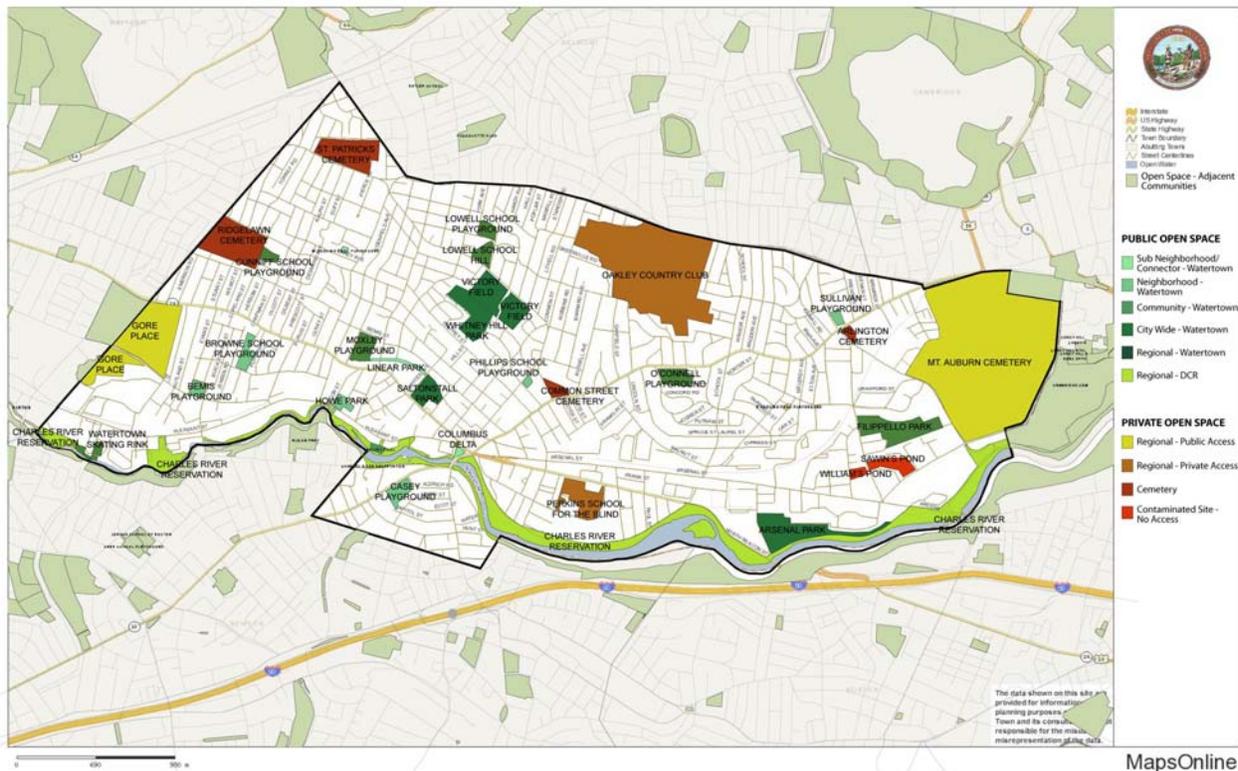


Figure 12 – Types of Open Space in Watertown and Adjacent Communities

Watertown has a considerable amount of private holdings and many of the public holdings and parks are relatively small at only a couple acres in size; however, the largest and most centralized public open space in Watertown is the combination of the naturally forested Whitney Hill, and

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the adjacent sports complex of Victory Field. Though located slightly to the west and definitely favoring those living in central Watertown, this combination of open space is easily accessible for most residents. This combination of parks provides slightly more than 17 ½ acres of open space and is no more than 2 ½ miles from any residence in Watertown. Whitney Hill is protected by Chapter 97 status and Victory Field is zoned in the Watertown Zoning Ordinance (WZO) for open space. In order to provide more equity to residents in other parts of the Town, Filippello Park was redeveloped in east Watertown, and plans to provide more programmed open space in west Watertown is being investigated. The entirety of Watertown is no more than a mile and a half from the Charles River which makes up most of Watertown's southern border with Newton and Boston. DCR owns and manages over 50 acres of land along the Watertown side of the Charles River and provides a significant asset to the town in terms of protected usable open space.

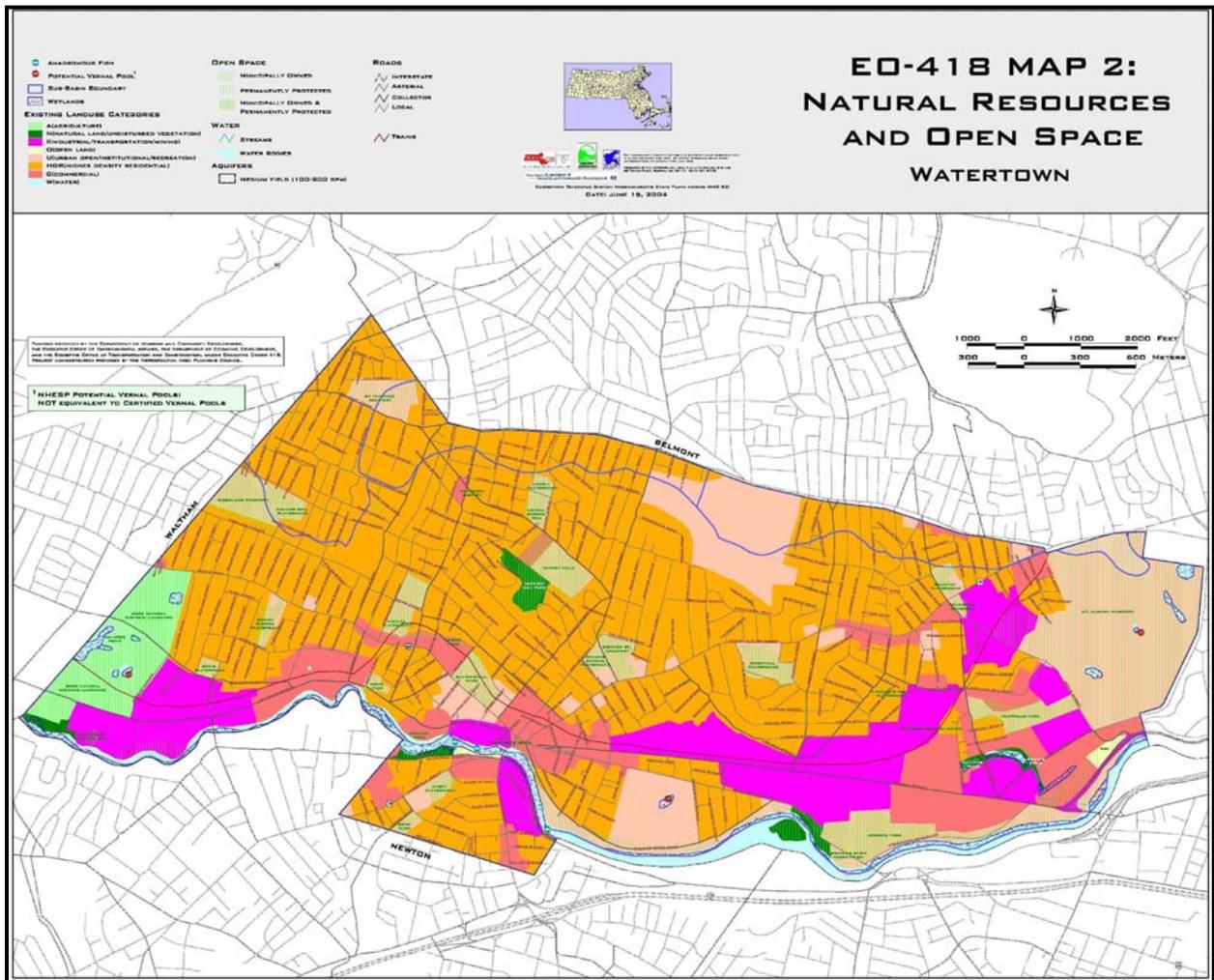


Figure 13 – EO-418 Map 2: Natural Resources and Open Space

Watertown's open space system, in both public and private properties, has varying degrees of protection from development. Presently only four municipally owned open space and recreational parcels – Arsenal Park, Filippello Park, and Saltonstall Park - are restricted from development. Whitney Hill, Arsenal Park, Filippello Park and Saltonstall Park are protected in perpetuity by Article 97 due to acquisition and improvement funds provided by Self-Help and Land & Water

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Conservation funds, respectively. Whitney Hill was deeded to the Town as parkland. The remaining open space and recreation parcels are protected by the Watertown Zoning Ordinance (WZO) and are zoned as “Open Space Conservation” (OSC). Although development is restricted by the current zoning, they are not protected from zoning changes that would allow development. Most private parcels are restricted solely by local authority (WZO) although wetlands also have additional protection under the state Wetlands Protection Act, the Rivers Protection Act and the EPA.

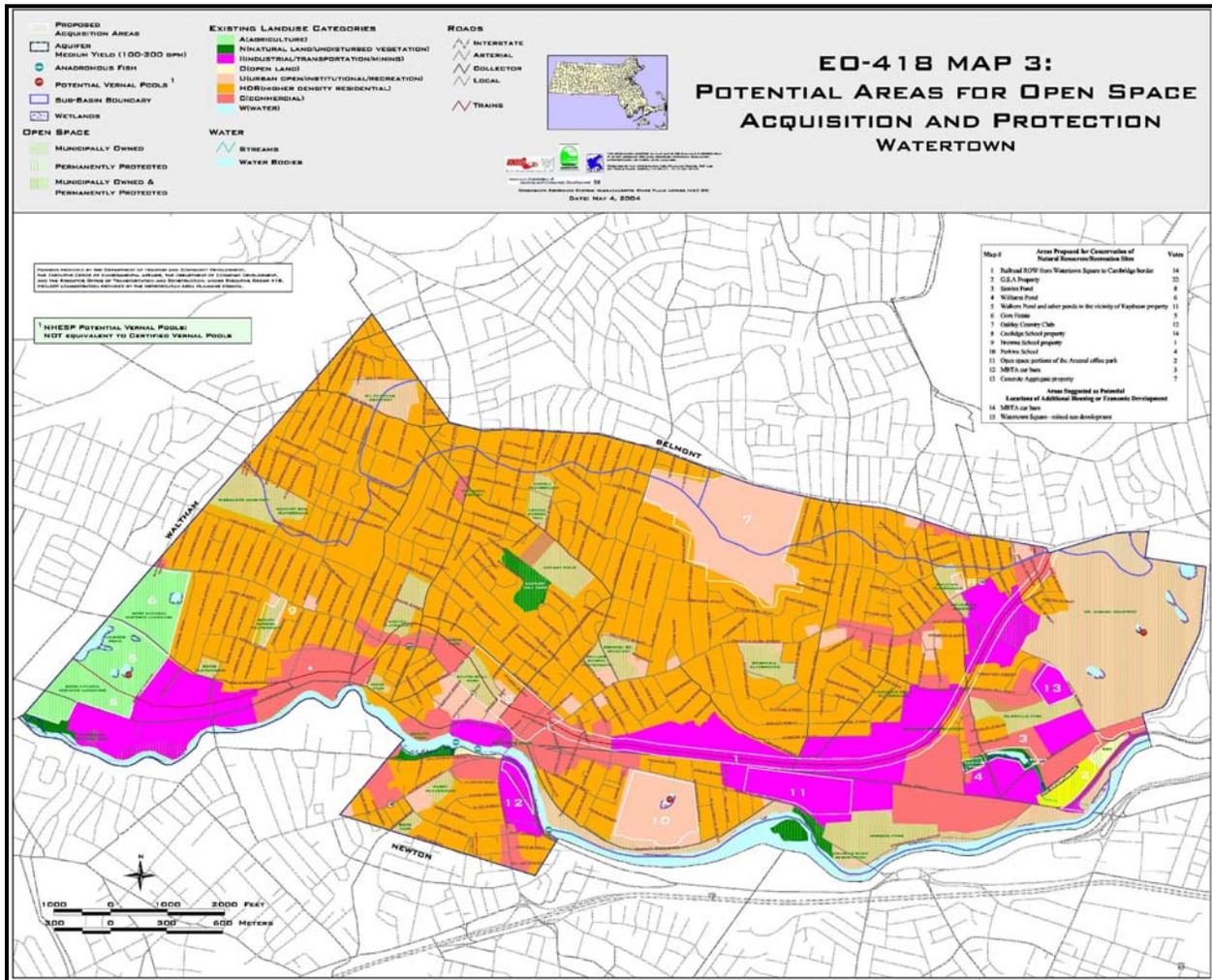


Figure 14 – EO-418 Map 3: Potential Areas for Open Space Acquisition and Protection

Approximately 115 acres of the parkland and open space are owned by the Town. This open space is augmented by some large privately owned open space. Mt. Auburn Cemetery is a semi-public open space offering a considerable opportunity for residents to enjoy a park-like atmosphere of a quality that few municipal governments could afford to undertake or maintain. Fortunately for the town, the very nature of a cemetery virtually, but not totally, assures a perpetual level of protection from development. Other privately owned parcels such as the Oakley Country Club and parts of the Gore Estate lack an inherent deterrent to development and thus require significant and persistent attention to ensure that this resource is not lost. The Task Force is concerned that projects have traditionally been reviewed individually rather than considered with

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regard to cumulative impacts on the town's stock of open space. The development of the grounds of the Rosary Academy and St. Patrick's Convent, as well as the intensification of development of smaller lots demonstrates that Watertown's privately owned open space is being eroded and will continue to decrease unless significant action is taken to enhance preservation.

**Summary Table for Watertown Conservation and Recreation Holdings**

Conservation and/or Recreation Holding	Acres	Ownership	Management Agency	Condition	Recreation Use	Recreation Type <small>*(See "Types of Open Space in a Recreation System")</small>	Grants Involved	Public Access	Level of Protection
Arsenal Park	13.7	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	General	City-wide or Urban Space	Self Help \$1,165,730 acquisition \$553,000 improvement	Open	In Perpetuity (Article 97)
Bemis Playground	1.9	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	Baseball and Local Activity	Neighborhood Space	None	Open	Zoning
Browne School Playground	2.4	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Poor (to be improved with new Police Station)	School Recess and T-Ball	Neighborhood Space	None	Open	Zoning
Casey Playground	4.2	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	Soccer and Softball	Neighborhood Space	None	Open	Zoning
Cunniff School Playground	2.3	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	Baseball and Recess	Community Space	None	Open	Zoning
Filippello Park	16.9	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Excellent	General, Baseball, Soccer	Community Space	Land and Water Conservation Fund \$463,568.23	Open	In Perpetuity (Article 97)
Howe Park	1.6	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	General, Basketball	Neighborhood Space	None	Open	Zoning
Linear Park	1.0	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	Walking, Passive	Sub Neighborhood /Connector	None	Open	Zoning
Lowell School Playground	3.7	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Fair	Recess, Field Sports	Community Space	None	Open	Zoning
Lowell School Hill	3.2	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Fair	Recess, Field Sports	Community Space	None	Open	Zoning
Moxley Playground	4.9	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	Recess, Field Sports	Community Space	None	Open	Zoning
O'Connell Playground	4.7	Town	DPW/ Recreation	Good	Recess, Field Sports	Community Space	None	Open	Zoning

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Conservation and/or Recreation Holding	Acres	Ownership	Management Agency	Condition	Recreation Use	Recreation Type *(See "Types of Open Space in a Recreation System")	Grants Involved	Public Access	Level of Protection
			Department						
Phillips School Playground	0.5	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Fair	Recess	Neighborhood Space	None	Open	Zoning
Saltonstall Park	5.3	Town	Recreation Department	Good	Baseball, Passive	City Wide Space	None	Open	In Perpetuity (Article 97)
Sullivan Playground	1.2	Town	DPW/ Recreation Department	Good	Baseball, Basketball	Neighborhood Space	None	Open	Zoning
Victory Field	11.1	Town	Recreation Department	Good	Field Sports	City Wide Space	None	Open	Zoning
Whitney Hill Park	6.07	Town	DPW	Fair	Walking, Passive	City Wide Space	None	Open	In Perpetuity (Chapter 97)

**B. PRIVATELY OWNED PARCELS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST**

Name of Privately-Owned Open Space Parcels	Recreation Use	Recreation Type	Acres
Mt. Auburn Cemetery (Watertown portion)	Historic, Passive, Educational,	Regional	164.0
Oakley Country Club	Golf	Regional	80.0
Gore Estate (Watertown portion)	Historic, Passive, Agric. Learning	Regional	31.6
Sawins Pond and Brook	NA	NA	3.8
Walkers Pond(approximate)	NA	NA	2.0
<b>Total Acres</b>			<b>281.4</b>

**MOUNT AUBURN CEMETARY**



<b>Owner:</b>	The Cemetery of Mt. Auburn
<b>Managed By:</b>	Mount Auburn Cemetery
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	Daylight hours only
<b>Public Grants:</b>	N/A
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning and limited wetlands protection (state, local)

The Watertown portion of Mt. Auburn Cemetery consists of 151.1 acres of well manicured grounds with numerous species of both indigenous and exotic tree and shrub species. The cemetery is Watertown’s largest contiguous open space and extends into Cambridge to the east. Parking is available for visitors.

Disabled accessibility is accomplished via the extensive network of paved pathways and roadways. The limited traffic is very conducive for dual vehicular/wheelchair uses. Bicycles are not permitted.

**Recommendation:**

The Town of Watertown could be more active in promoting Mt. Auburn Cemetery as an amenity in Watertown.



## THE OAKLEY COUNTRY CLUB

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<b>Owner:</b>	The Oakley Country Club
<b>Managed By:</b>	The Oakley Country Club
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	Membership Only
<b>Public Grants:</b>	N/A
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	
<b>Zoning:</b>	CR (Cluster Residential)
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Ch. 61b, Zoning

This large track of land situated in the northern bounds of the Town provides both a well maintained private golf course and limited wildlife habitat. Currently the site consists of several individual parcels zoned as CR (Cluster Residential). The site is surrounded on three sides by residential development and has Belmont Street as its northern boundary. Efforts to prevent the future development of the site into a multitude of housing lots and structures resulted in the site's rezoning as CR in 1989. The intention of this rezoning effort was to limit the spread of housing units across the entire site and thus preserving a significant area for open space. In 2004, the Oakley Country Club decided to participate in the Chapter 61b recreational land program which offers the Town the right of first refusal to purchase the land. In the winter of 2004-2005 the Club prohibited sledding on the course, an activity historically enjoyed by the public.

### Recommendations:

Explore whether there is a way to give greater open space protection through zoning or a conservation restriction

Negotiate feasibility of restoring public sledding

## SAWINS POND/BROOK AND WILLIAMS POND

---



<b>Owner:</b>	71 Arlington Street Trust, Trustees: Maximos Hatziliades & Savvas Iliades
<b>Managed By:</b>	The 71 Arlington Street Trust
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	None
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	None
<b>Zoning:</b>	I-2
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Wetlands protection (state, federal and local)

This private pond is located to the east of the intersection of Arlington and Arsenal Streets. The pond area is surrounded by limited vegetation (trees, grasses, and marsh grass) and is bounded to the south by Arlington Street. Currently the site is inaccessible due to a chain link fence. The eastern edge appears to have been used for roadside dumping before the fence was erected. The site is known to be contaminated (water and soil) due to previous industrial uses. The wetland classification prevents development within 150' of the shoreline. The site is subject to Conservation Commission jurisdiction and any development would require its approval.

**Recommendations:**

The Town should work with the owner of the property and state officials to arrange for characterization and cleanup of site contamination.

The Town should pursue acquisition and protection of this site for use as a wetland education area and/or as part of a continuous greenway extending from Williams Pond to the GSA property on Greenough Boulevard.

**GORE ESTATE**



<b>Owner:</b>	The Gore Place Society
<b>Managed By:</b>	The Gore Place Society
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	Limited
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	Moderate
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning and Wetlands protection (federal, state and local)

This 31 acre site extends along the Town’s western border with Waltham and is currently used for limited agriculture. A large historic home is set atop a hillside towards the northern edge of the site. Several small ponds are present as is a stream. Development of the site is restricted by wetland areas as well as the historic nature of the estate itself. Disabled access is provided by asphalt paths that run from the parking lots down to the farm areas. Portions of this site have been considered for future public open space.

**Recommendation:**

Support preservation of the use of the site as an historic property.

**WALKERS POND**



<b>Owner:</b>	Gore Place Society
<b>Managed By:</b>	Gore Place Society
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	None
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	Not relevant – public access restricted
<b>Zoning:</b>	I-3
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning and Wetlands protection (federal, state and local)

This site is located south of Waltham Street on land owned by the Gore Place Society that had been leased to UBS (who later purchased the site) at the western edge of the town bordering Waltham. The site has 27 acres in Watertown and 4 acres in Waltham. Currently the site is surrounded by a chain link fence which precludes public access. Walkers pond has steep sloping banks to a small (approximately 2 acre) pond bounded by limited vegetation. The site is isolated amongst highly paved industrial land uses and associated roadways. The status of the soil and

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water quality is not known. Two other ponds are nearby. The land is sought-after by residential developers. The Town’s wetland ordinance limits the areas of the parcel that can be redeveloped. This site has been considered in the past as potential public open space.

**Recommendation:**

Explore ways to make this pond and surrounding land available as public open space.

### WALNUT STREET LINEAR PARK



<b>Owner:</b>	Arsenal View LLC
<b>Managed By:</b>	Arsenal View LLC
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	Yes
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	
<b>Zoning:</b>	I-3
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

Recently, the Town approved the development of the new Lexus dealership on Arsenal Street on condition of extensive landscaping and a linear park at the rear of the site, on Walnut Street. The landscaping has greatly enhanced the appearance of Walnut Street and offers restful spaces for residents and nearby workers. The development of this parcel was contingent on providing passage along the Arsenal Street side of the property. This path is in place awaiting the state funded path beginning on the opposite side of School Street. The Bike-Ped Committee anticipates a future study and funding to extend a path connection on private property heading west towards Watertown Square.

### C. PUBLICLY OWNED PARCELS (INCLUDING TOWN, PARK & CEMETERY ACRES)

Name	Acres
<b>Parks &amp; Playgrounds</b>	
1. Arsenal Park	13.7
2. Bemis Playground	1.9
3. Browne School Playground	2.4
4. Casey Playground	4.2
5. Cunniff School Playground	2.3
6. Filippello Park	16.9
7. Howe Park	1.6
8. Linear Park	1.0
9. Lowell School Playground	3.7
10. Lowell School Hill	3.2

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Name	Acres
.	
11 Moxley Playground	4.9
.	
12 O'Connell Playground	4.7
.	
13 Phillips School Playground	0.5
.	
14 Saltonstall Park	5.3
.	
15 Sullivan Playground	1.2
.	
16 Victory Field	11.1
.	
17 Whitney Hill Park	6.07
.	
<b>Other Town Properties</b>	
1. Administration Building Landscaping	0.3
2. Commanders Mansion & environs	7.0
3. DPW Yard	1.0*
<b>Deltas</b>	
1. Carver Road Delta	0.25*
2. Church Street Park Area	0.25*
3. Columbus Delta	0.69*
4. Common Delta	0.25*
5. Irving Park	0.5*
6. Knowles Delta	0.25*
7. Shattuck Road Delta	0.25*
8. School and Belmont Streets Delta	0.25*
9. Templeton Parkway Delta	0.25*
<b>Other Town Maintained Open Space</b>	
1. Goldie Street (left side off Waverley Avenue)	0.25*
2. Carey Avenue @ King Street (right side of Lexington Street)	0.25*
3. Ladd Place	0.25*
4. Mt. Auburn and Arsenal Streets (weed and prune shrubs)	0.5*
5. Arsenal and N. Beacon Streets (weed and prune trees and shrubs)	0.5*
6. Church Street @ Tresca's	0.25*
7. Nichols Ave. between Arlington Street and end of meters	0.25*
8. Royal Street at Multi-Service Center	0.5*
9. Rosedale at Acton Street (cut all four corners)	0.5*
10. Pleasant Street at Waltham Street (trim back ten feet at corner)	0.5*
.	
11 Ridgelawn Cemetery (northwest Watertown)	17.58
.	
12 Common Street Cemetery (central Watertown)	2.5
.	
13 Arlington Street Cemetery (east Watertown)	1.24

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Name	Acres
14 Green Myrtle and Pleasant Streets	0.25*
15 Former rail land at Howard to Main Street	1.29
16 Bancroft and Waverley Avenue	0.25*
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>114.58</b>

\*approximate acreage

### Town Owned Park and Recreation Land by Site

Each site summary below includes a brief description of the park or playground, adjacent land uses and street frontage, and the facilities that are provided, including provision for parking. Park elements and structures (paving, benches, play equipment, tables, etc.) and plantings were visually appraised to assess the overall condition of each park or playground and its level of functioning. Key issues at each site are identified to provide a context for evaluating the playing fields. Each park and recreational area was assessed for ADA Accessibility. The Watertown Commission on Disabilities provided the funding for the ADA Access Self-Evaluation report, which was conducted by Adaptive Environments. Listed in each section below are the ADA minimum compliance recommendations for each site. The full ADA reports are very extensive, and are included in the report, *Watertown Open Space and Recreational Areas: Review for accessibility and human centered design characteristics*; Produced by Adaptive Environments. Many of the ADA issues associated with the parks have been inventoried in this section. It is the intent of the Town of Watertown that ADA issues be at the foreground of all park development and improvements in the future. To this end, a portion of the inventory referenced above is included in this section.

### Field Conditions Survey

Athletic fields and playgrounds make up a significant portion of Watertown's recreational areas. Many of the playgrounds function as school recess areas and extra-curricular sports fields. The forestry and parks foreman of the Watertown Department of Public Works directs the sports field maintenance of each area. Each field is managed in accordance with the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program developed by the forestry and parks foreman. The IPM plan ensures compliance with the Children's Protection Act of 2000, effectively eliminating pesticides applied to the fields while school is in session. Compliance with the Act presents considerable challenges to maintaining sport playing surfaces free of weeds, disease and insects. The primary function of turf fields in school athletics is to provide a quality playing surface while reducing the potential for injury to young athletes. The DPW has maintained the turf in compliance with the Children's Protection Act.

Turfgrass Environmental of Longmeadow, Massachusetts assessed each field on September 1, 2005. A turf quality rating system of 1-9 was used to assess individual components of turfgrass quality. The following chart describes the rating system used in this report. When appropriate, specific recommendations for turf maintenance have been discussed.

**Athletic Field Rating System**

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density	1-9	Looks at overall turfgrass quality. 9=Excellent, 1=very poor, no turf.
Thatch	thickness	Optimum thatch layer for athletic fields is 1/2" .
Weeds	1-9	Assessment of weed species/population. 1=few to no weeds, 9=excessive weeds present.
Compaction	1-9	Assessment of subsurface hardness or compaction. A rating of 5 would be optimum for athletic fields.
Tensile	1-9	Assessment of turfgrass structure and resistance to tearing. A rating of 5 would be optimum for athletic fields.
Disease	As noted	General observation of turf disease signs and symptoms at the time of inspection.
Insects	As noted	General observation of damaging insect signs and symptoms at the time of inspection.

**ARSENAL PARK**



<b>Address:</b>	Behind 485 Arsenal Street
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	Self Help \$1,165,730 (acquisition) & \$553,000 (improvement)
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	In Perpetuity (Article 97)

**Description:**

Arsenal Park is a large multi purpose park located behind the Arsenal Mall along Pleasant Street. The park encompasses approximately 13.7 acres (7.6 active and 6.1 passive). To the south of the park are Greenough Boulevard and the Charles River. The park is constructed on property that the U.S. Arsenal once used for various manufacturing purposes. New equipment in the tot lot was installed in 2001 and a poured in place rubberized surface was put under the equipment. The facility has 2 basketball courts, 1 bocce ball court, 6 tennis courts, one multi purpose soccer/softball field, an open air amphitheater, a skateboard area (former basketball court converted in 2003), a hopscotch area, four square area, 1 street hockey/whiffle ball court, 1 two-sided Tennis Bang Board, 1 volley ball court and a cross-country running course. Picnic areas are provided with grills, park benches, picnic tables, and two pavilions. Since the 1996 Update, 8 additional picnic tables and 4 additional grills have been added, as well as additional plantings. A fence was installed on the south side of the park near the tennis courts as recommended in the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The site is accessed via a drive to the west side of the Arsenal Mall. Parking is centrally located on the site.

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The grounds of the town-owned Commander's Mansion were designed by the Olmstead firm.

### Activity:

General activity/access

### Conditions Assessment and Key Issues:

The park as a whole is in good condition. The basketball court areas are in need of color sealing. The bocce court needs proper surfacing. The amphitheater is under-used and could benefit from electric outlets, a stage backdrop, and improved seating. A noise buffer would lessen noise impacts from the adjacent roadway and make the amphitheater more inviting. Enhancements to the amphitheater would add diversity to the Town's recreational resources especially if lighting makes evening uses possible. The soccer field is suitable for young children due to its non-regulation size.

### Field Conditions: (See Section 7(c)(2)(1) for a description of the field rating system)

Arsenal Park is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	5	Excessive wear/damage
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	8	Significant cover is clover/crabgrass and chickweed
Compaction	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		Significant turf loss from summer patch. The disease is not active at this time.
Insects		None observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Pedestrian route from Arsenal Street through the mall to Arsenal Park

Currently, there is no continuous sidewalk from Arsenal Street and across the mall parking to Arsenal Park. Where sidewalks exist, curb ramps do not.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Connect facility to public way.

#### Parking Area

Sidewalks between areas lack required curb ramps.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install curb ramps.

#### Curb ramps at each end of the parking lot

Curb ramps have slopes and vertical lips that are difficult to traverse for baby carriages, wheelchairs and other wheeled devices and that may cause tripping. The catch basin grate with its wide openings parallel to the path of travel is a hazard for cyclists and people with disabilities.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair or replace curb ramps, eliminate the vertical lips.
- Replace grate with openings no more than 1/2" in the direction of travel.

#### Parking Spaces

No parking spaces are accessible.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish accessible parking spaces, including at least one for vans.

and level space between them that connects to the accessible path.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create a paved clear space between benches. 50% of the benches should have 50% arms.

#### Ball field bleachers

People who need an accessible route cannot currently reach the bleachers.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish accessible route to bleachers.

#### Benches mounted on wall at turn around

Benches are too low for adults to sit on and too wide for leaning back.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Raise benches to 17"H. Add backs or reduce width of benches to between +/- 22"

#### Walkway from turn around to courts

Walkways have large cracks and have vertical displacements greater than 1/4" that are tripping hazards.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair accordingly.

#### Gate into tennis courts adjacent skate park

Gate opening is less than 3' wide and lacks a solid surface at bottom of the push side of gate so that a person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in the mesh.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

a state of disrepair.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair benches.
- Head up trees to at least 8' so that when wet, they do not hang below 80".

**Walkway along north edge of courts**

The walk is quite lengthy but lacks benches for resting or to watch tennis. Walkways have large cracks and have vertical displacements greater than 1/4" that are tripping hazards.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Middle gate to courts**

Gate opening is less than 3' wide and lacks a solid surface on the push side so that a person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in the mesh.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Make gate accessible.

**Bocce Court**

For people with disabilities, no access is provided into the court.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Make court accessible.

**Gate at tennis court adjacent bocce court**

Latching mechanism (a chain) is not usable by a person with poor dexterity.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Provide an accessible latching mechanism.

**Public Restrooms**

While the restrooms are frequently used, they are not accessible.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Replace door lock which is not operable with a closed fist;
- Replace door handle (left door) which appears to be worn or broken;
- Replace sink so that it does not protrude into clear space;
- Relocate the grab bars which are now too high;
- Relocate side grab bar which now is 50" from back wall (54" is required); and Relocate toilet which now is mounted to far from the side wall.

**Picnic area at basketball courts**

Walkways have large cracks and have vertical displacements greater than 1/4" that are tripping hazards. Catch basin grate has openings that are too large and could cause tripping or catch a wheel.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair all vertical displacements.
- Replace grate with 1/2" maximum holes.

**Path from picnic area at basketball courts**

Walkway has large cracks and has vertical displacements greater than 1/4" that are tripping hazards.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Picnic and grill area below basketball courts**

While these picnic facilities seem to be used frequently, a person needing an accessible route or tables could not

utilize them.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route to one table and grill at this table.
- Table tops should extend a minimum of 19" clear space from the leg, have 30" of clear width and be at a height of not less than 27" to the underside of the table top.
- Concrete pads should extend beyond their current dimensions to provide a stable seating area at the ends and a path around the table.
- Adjacent soil should be level at or slightly above the concrete pads to minimize vertical displacement and tripping hazards and allow access to table ends.

**Path toward and above amphitheater**

Walkway has debris on it from erosion and the edge is eroding. At other points, the walkway has sunken portions or large cracks that exceed 1/2".

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair and maintain the path and benches accordingly.

**Greenough Blvd**

This worn path leads to the unofficial crossing to the parking area at the edge of the Charles River.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Create an accessible route to corner.

**N. Beacon (RT 20), Greenough Blvd. and Arsenal Ct.**

A person requiring an accessible route would not be able to cross. The existing crosswalks do not follow pedestrian desire lines.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Install curb ramps and crosswalks.

**Gate to Arsenal Court Drive**

The gate to Arsenal Court Drive (to the Commander's Mansion) appears to be used frequently but is not accessible.

**Minimum Compliance**

- The step should be ramped and gate left permanently open so that it does not block access

**Concrete walk leading to main parking lot area**

The concrete walk appears to be recently poured. Unfortunately, this section is breaking up and its joint has some vertical displacement.

**Minimum compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Additional Recommendations:**

1. Due to the recently completed capital improvements on this site only minimal repairs and improvements are needed.
2. Since the field areas were not designed for intensive field sport use, a vigorous maintenance and management plan should be implemented to prevent field degradation.
3. Repair cracks in the court area and color seal the court area
4. Replace wood boards on benches and tables where needed

- 5. Resurface the Bocce court
- 6. Repair the tennis court lights
- 7. Add electrical outlet outside the bathroom building
- 8. Add electrical outlets at the amphitheater area, along with additional seating, a stage backdrop and a wooden noise buffer.
- 9. The Open Space Committee notes that the

- amphitheater could be utilized as an adjunct theater in relation to the new Arts Center
- 10. The Town should explore enlarging the field to allow its use for soccer
- 11. Plan for future multi-use path from Charles River to the state funded path via Talcott Avenue and Arsenal Park access road, which would cross Arsenal Street to

## BEMIS PLAYGROUND



<b>Address:</b>	Corner of Bridge and Waltham Streets
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### Description:

The playground is approximately 1.9 acres (all active recreation). Stop & Shop donated \$60,000 to rebuild the tot lot and install new benches and tables in 1996-1997. A new overhead track rider was installed in 2000. The tot lot received a new rubberized surface in 2005. A batting cage was constructed on the west side of the park in 2001. Street parking is available; there is no on-site parking. The playground serves as both a neighborhood tot lot and as a little league baseball field. A basketball court and street hockey court are installed at the western edge of the lot. An irrigation system was added to the park in 2002.

### Activity:

Little League Baseball  
Local Activity

### Condition Assessment and Key Issues:

The tot lot areas and the basketball/ street hockey court are in good condition as a result of recent improvements. The designs of some of these improvements are inherently maintenance intensive, such as the lack of foundations beneath park benches and tables, necessitating costly and timely trimming and/or controlling weeds with herbicides, which is not allowed at schools. The tot lot area received a rubberized surface as noted above to provide proper protection from falling. The retaining barrier along the play areas does not appear to be adequate for the installed swing sets. The Tree Warden planted three trees to shade the tot lot.

### Field Conditions:

The Bemis Playground is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests. The field shows good drainage.

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Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density	9	Excellent
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	2	Some Clover Present
Compaction	5	Optimum
Tensile	5	Optimum
Disease		None observed
Insects		None observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Main gate at Buick and Bridge Streets

Though the entry is used frequently, it is not formalized and has many obstacles.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible entry with curb ramp to street.

#### Field heading toward ball diamond

Once within the facility, there are no accessible routes to reach various elements.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- All elements must be connected by an accessible route.

#### Gateway along Bridge Street

The gateway and its connection to the street have not been formalized. The gate could connect to a new accessible route

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible entry, including a curb ramp to the street.

#### Bleachers and Benches

The bleachers seem to move each time the field is mowed and they are not always oriented to the ball diamond. Neither the bleachers nor bench are on an accessible route or offer accessible pull off spaces.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish accessible routes to the features.

#### Ball Diamond

Currently, the ball diamond and its dug-out seating areas are not easily accessed by people with disabilities. There is significant erosion at the ends of the concrete dugout pads resulting in 1"+ tripping hazard. People with disabilities cannot traverse the area behind the backstop because the concrete does not extend around the back stop. Instead the concrete gives way to a loose muddy surface approximately 1-2" below the pad. Further, the yellow gear box's present location narrows the walkway.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair surfaces and repair vertical displacements.
- Install a flush accessible surface.

#### Path from dugout to the corner of Evans and Waltham Streets

From the ball diamond and dug-out, there is no accessible route to reach the entry gate (at the corner of Evans and Waltham Sts), water fountain and the batting cage.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- All elements shall be located on an accessible route.

#### Corner of Evans and Waltham Streets

People with disabilities cannot access the water fountain, gear box or trash can. Further, many people with disabilities cannot enter the facility at this entry. There are no curb ramps to the crosswalk and the surfaces are uneven.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- All elements shall be located on an accessible route.
- Establish an accessible route into the park including curb ramps along the exterior sidewalks.

#### Walkway behind batting cage to ball courts

Though heavily used, the walkway would be quite difficult for many people with disabilities to traverse. They cannot access the batting cage and because of the asphalt beam, accessing some of the courts is impossible. There is also evidence of drainage problems

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route to the courts as well as into the batting cage.

#### Basketball Court

Benches are in a washed out area.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- All elements shall be located on an accessible route.

#### Entry at Evans and Buick Streets

People appear to utilize this entry heavily though it is not formalized with an accessible route.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible entry, including exterior sidewalk, crosswalk, and curb ramps.

#### Play Structure

While the play structure and adjacent tables are not

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located on an accessible route and the surface at the structure is not yet accessible, the structure has several notable features that should be kept: the slides are light colored and face in a northerly direction - each helps to keep the surfaces cool despite a stark lack of shade.

### ***Minimum Compliance***

- *Create an accessible route to and throughout the play structure and picnic tables*

### **Additional Recommendations:**

1. Plant additional trees to serve as both a natural buffer

between the neighborhood and the teams playing baseball and to provide shade for summer patrons and picnickers

2. Replace backstop
3. Color seal court area
4. Add handicapped parking and access ramps
5. Add bathroom facilities
6. Repair erosion at west side of basketball court

## BROWNE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND



<b>Address:</b>	Acton Street at Brandley Road
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### **Description:**

The playground behind the Browne School serves as a neighborhood recreation area and as the playground for children attending the private elementary school housed in the building. The school is at the top of a hill with the playfield area sloping down behind the school towards Acton Street. A small softball field area is at the southern edge of the site at Acton Street. The slope is less severe as one moves away from the school. The site is bounded on both sides by residential structures resulting in neighbor complaints about improper use of the field.

A tot lot area is provided farther up the hill towards the school. The tot lot equipment is owned by the private school and is in need of replacement. If the Town reassumes use of the site, the tot lot area should be redesigned. Parking is available at the Browne School parking lot after regular school hours. There is no irrigation system at this site and if one were installed it could improve the all around condition of the turf. The site last received significant improvements in 2003, when a new backstop and player's benches with protective fencing were installed and the infield was improved.

During 2005, the site was selected as the new location for the Police Station.

### **Activity:**

Grammar School Recess  
Tee Ball

### **Condition Assessment and Key Issues:**

The poor site conditions coupled with the extensive use by children as an unstructured playground

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would make potential improvements to this field short-lived at best. If it is ever determined that this field is suitable for organized field sports, the site be significantly reconfigured and leveled. New turf should be installed along with an irrigation system. If, on the other hand, it is determined that this field serves a vital neighborhood need by providing young children with an area for play and practice, only moderate measures are recommended to improve the field. Field improvement in this scenario should involve improved drainage, turf, and landscaping to reduce erosion. At this time, efforts should be made to discourage improper field uses that may adversely impact the neighbors, such as adult softball, or other structured activities that require more space.

### Field Conditions:

Browne school playground is not irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests. The excessive wear from recess activities and sports programs reduce the turf quality on this field. Fall or annual core aeration and seeding is recommended.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	2	Poor
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Additional thatch development will reduce wear and weed competition.
Weeds	9	High density of weeds. Clover/crabgrass
Compaction	9	Excessive activity on field. Very compacted
Tensile	2	Weeds and compaction reduce tensile strength
Disease		None observed
Insects		None Observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Walkway from Acton St to the former Browne School

The path, in its current form, exceeds 5% grade in many areas but does not have level landings and resting areas.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Regrade path to ensure that it is consistently below 5%. Take up the additional vertical rise with several ramped sections with 60" landings at top and bottom.

#### Entry gate from Acton St.

The slope at the gate exceeds 12.5%. The gate is not accessible, swings into the sidewalk and does not open completely.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Replace walkway with a 1:12 ramp with handrails.
- Remove the existing gate or replace it with an accessible gate. On the pull side, the gate must have a 60" level landing and at least 18" clear space alongside.

#### Sidewalk along Acton St.

The sidewalk is in poor condition, is narrow and has numerous tripping hazards. In some areas, sections of broken rusty fence protrude into the path of travel.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Replace the entire sidewalk with a new sidewalk 5' wide.

#### Acton St and Brandley Rd

The intersection does not have curb ramps or crosswalks to reach the park.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install curb ramps and crosswalks

#### Ball Diamond

Presently, the ball diamond and its dug-out seating areas are not easily accessed by people with disabilities.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Connect dugouts to an accessible route.
- Install accessible gates including 24" accessible surface on pull side.

##### Additional Recommendations:

1. Redesign and replace the tot lot if the Town becomes caretaker for the site
2. Install a rubberized safety surface under play equipment if the Town becomes caretaker for the site
3. Install an irrigation system if field sports are encouraged

4. Maintain field turf as part of Town's maintenance program

## W.O. JAMES CASEY PLAYGROUND



<b>Address:</b>	Watertown Street at Aldrich Road
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### Description:

This 4.2 acre playground is located on the south side of Watertown Street, abutting a residential neighborhood to the east and north. There is a small on-site parking lot and street parking is available along Watertown Street. The former Parker School, now used for office space, is located on top of a hill on the southern part of the site. The hill is used for sledding in the winter months. The site has a small multi use soccer field/ softball field, two basketball courts, three tennis courts, and a tot lot area that was completely done over in 2003. In 2001-2002 two play structures, one for two to five year olds and one for 5 to 12 year olds were renovated. The tot lot surface is made up of poured-in-place rubber. Other improvements at that time included trees, shrubs, a disabled access table, water fountain and benches. The basketball courts were rebuilt and lights were added. All of the tennis court lights were replaced. Both the basketball and tennis courts were color sealed. The area behind the softball backstop was color sealed and hopscotch and four square markings were painted on the surface. A new irrigation system was installed in 2003.

### Activity:

Youth Soccer spring and fall  
 Adult Softball summer and fall

### Conditions Assessment and Key Issues:

The playground is in overall good condition; recommendations for improvements are noted below.

### Field Conditions:

Casey Playground is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
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Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density	7	Good
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	5	Center field-90% crabgrass Right field-clover and plantain
Compaction	5	Optimum
Tensile	3	Weeds reduce tensile strength
Disease		None observed
Insects		Grub activity observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Watertown St. Crosswalk

The crosswalk does not have curb ramps on both ends nor does it align with the walkway into the park.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install curb ramps at both ends of crosswalk.

#### Watertown St Sidewalk

Portions of the sidewalk, including where tree pits formerly existed, are uneven or have significant vertical and horizontal displacement. These are tripping hazards.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair accordingly.

#### Corner of Watertown St. and Aldrich Rd.

Pedestrians are confronted with significant cross-slopes, lengthy crossing distances and a lack of defined sidewalks along Aldrich Rd. The existing curb ramps do not align with the path of travel.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish accessible street corners.

#### Aldrich Rd. Parking Lot

Though the lot is not striped, park users park in it. There are no accessible parking spaces along Watertown St. or Aldrich Rd.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish accessible parking spaces.

#### Tennis Court Gate at Aldrich Rd. Parking Lot

Despite frequent usage, the courts do not have formalized entry points on at least three sides and the current entry point is challenging.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Make gate accessible.

#### Walkway from Aldrich Rd. Parking Lot to Basketball Court

Park users entering at this location are confronted by low hanging branches, significant vertical displacements (tripping hazards), a bench that is at the top of the sloped walkway where it blocks the level landing, and benches that are too low.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Remove bench at top of walkway
- Head up trees to at least 8' where trees overhang path.
- Repair or repave asphalt to eliminate vertical

displacements.

#### Courtside Bench with back

People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend 3' on either side of the bench.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create clear space.

#### Walkway from Basketball Court to Play structure

While the walkway appears to be fairly new, it has a cross-slope that in areas is 2.5-3.1% in the direction of the catch basin. The adjacent lawn is significantly below the walkway adding an additional concern.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Cross-slopes must be brought into compliance.
- The adjacent landscape grades should be raised (and maintained) to be flush with the walkway.

#### Tree in center of Play Structure

The Play Structure is fortunate to have a tree in the center of it to provide shade. However the low branches are a hazard.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair benches and head up trees to at least 80" where trees overhang path.

#### Movable Bleachers at Ball Diamond

The bleachers are considerably worn but the soil wear indicates that they are used.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- The bleachers should be located on an accessible route with adequate clear space around them for people to sit alongside and in front of them.

#### Dugout

Presently, the ball diamond and its dug-out seating areas are not easily accessed by people with disabilities.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route to the dugouts.
- Address tripping hazards.

#### Game Court

The court is surrounded by an asphalt berm and is not on accessible route. Thus it is not easily accessed by people with mobility disabilities. The court also has some ongoing drainage and runoff problems.

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### ***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route to the court and remove sections of the asphalt berm. Address drainage problems.

### **Dugout**

Presently, this side of the ball diamond and its dug-out seating areas are not easily accessed by people with physical disabilities.

### ***Minimum Compliance***

- All features must be located on an accessible route.

### **Additional Recommendations:**

1. Repair cracks in tennis court area
2. Color seal court areas
3. Address drainage problem between first and second base
4. Maintain turf conditions as part of Town's maintenance program
5. Replace fabric on ball field backstop
6. Add bathroom facilities

## CUNNIFF SCHOOL PLAYGROUND



<b>Address:</b>	246 Warren Street
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### **Description:**

This playground serves as a playground area for the Cunniff Elementary School and a practice field for local sport teams. The site has a moderate slope toward the school making the site suitable only for practices. The field is also quite small, further restricting its use for scheduled sports practice. The site abuts residential properties to the east and south. To the west is the Ridgelawn Cemetery. The site also has a tot lot area. Through the efforts of the P.T.O. there is new equipment and the area is called the "Cunniff Cove". Since the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Cunniff School building expanded, reducing the size of the playground. The tot lot had a new rubberized safety surface installed in 2005. Presently the slide and swing areas have a rubberized surface. The basketball court was relocated to another area of the park. It needs to be color sealed and a drain cover near the court is raised and needs to be lowered. Parking is available at the school's parking lot.

### **Activity:**

Baseball  
Recess

### **Conditions and Key Issues:**

The playground is in overall good condition; recommendations for improvements are noted below.

### **Field Conditions:**

Cuniff School playground is not irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual

soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	2	Excessive wear
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	1	Field is over 80% clover, plantain and crabgrass
Compaction	1	Lack of turf and excess activity encourages increased compaction.
Tensile	3	Acceptable in turf areas
Disease		None observed
Insects		Grub activity on south facing slopes-yellowing turf

The lack of irrigation and excessive activity allow for increased weed competition and population. Limited turf cover and thatch development also leads to increased compaction. An aggressive core aeration and seeding program will help relieve excessive compaction. Without irrigation, crabgrass and weeds will continue to dominate the stressed turf.

**ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:**

**Pathway - Warren Street to Copeland/ Grandview Avenue (along Playground and NW side of school) and new Playground**

The route serves users of the playground and ball diamond. It begins adjacent to the school drop-off area and ascends, over several hundred linear feet, to reach the intersection of Copeland and Grandview. Slopes in certain locations, exceed 5% (1:20) and in at least one location, the slope exceeds 9%.

The path is also exceptionally narrow, 42 inches or less, for more than 300 feet. In some locations the path is 1-6 inches above the adjacent lawn or contains vertical displacements. People who require space for passing, benches or level landings for resting will have significant challenges because there are none. Further, there are no level landings where paths intersect or railings where slopes exceed 5%.

While the path goes past the ball field, it does not connect to it nor does the secondary path. That path currently ends at a set of fire doors instead of wrapping around the building to the ball diamond, its dug-outs and another school entrance.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route that includes level landings for every 30" of elevation gain as well as 5' wide passing locations.
- Install a curb ramp to the drop-off area.

**Ball diamond**

People with disabilities would likely find it difficult to reach the ball diamond, bleachers, as well as the entire rear of the school.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Ensure that the features are on an accessible route.

**Basketball Court**

Currently, the basketball court is not easily accessed by most people. Both of the current entry gates are not structured. For people with disabilities, neither of the entry points is accessible. There is also no accessible route from the ball field around the court to reach the parking lot. There is no seating provided for visitors watching people play. It is also unclear what purpose the catch basin serves while it is substantially elevated above the surrounding grade.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Ensure that this is located on an accessible route and has an accessible entrance.

**Accessible Parking Spaces**

The existing accessible parking spaces do not conform to code requirements including slope requirements. It should also be noted that the grade of the driveway up to the parking lot may be an obstacle for some low-floor vehicles.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish accessible parking spaces.

**Front Walkways to the School**

Pedestrians needing an accessible route from the sidewalk will find that there is no accessible route. The parking lot and front walkways are several feet above the street. The walkways have cracks and vertical displacements greater than 1/4" that are tripping hazards.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route.
- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

**Warren Street Mid-block crossing**

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The sidewalk appears to have been recently modified with a driveway/curb cut. Unfortunately, the manner in which it was constructed is inappropriate and consequently, pedestrians now experience cross slopes of up to 16%.

**Minimum Compliance**

- The sidewalk should be torn up, a parallel curb ramp installed.
- OR the crosswalk should be raised to increase the safety of students as well as to calm traffic speeds and the sidewalk be raised to the same height.

**Stairs from the main entrance to the Warren Street Mid-block crossing**

The stairs, landing and adjacent hillside have experienced water damage such that the landing has sunk over an inch below its installed height. For stair users who are not paying attention, they can easily trip going down ending up face down on the stairs or sidewalk.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair vertical displacements as soon as possible.
- Install handrails on each side of the stairs.

**Additional Recommendations:**

1. Rebuild baseball/softball infield
2. Address issues with drain covers in the playground
3. Improve turf conditions
4. Color seal basketball court
5. Create a windbreak on the west side of the park with appropriate plantings

## FILIPELLO PARK



<b>Address:</b>	Arlington Street at Elm Street
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	Land and Water Conservation Fund \$463,568.23
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	In perpetuity (Article 97)

**Description:**

This large park in the eastern portion of Watertown was created in the 1980's after the former Town dump was closed. The western edge of the site is now vacant since the 2004 demolition of the town incinerator. The park has two multi-use sports fields, three basketball courts, two tot lots, two picnic pavilions, a water park and paved trails. Major renovations were completed in 2001. The two multi-use fields were reconstructed and irrigation systems were added to both fields. A drainage problem in the left field of the Softball field is ongoing. The play equipment in both tot lots was also replaced and a rubber safety surface has been added to both tot lots. The larger tot lot was also moved closer to Arlington Street. The smaller tot lot has rubber pads to make it disabled accessible. There is tot-lot by the parking lot, geared to 2 to 5 year-olds, and an older children's tot lot. The three basketball courts were resurfaced, but one was later damaged and needs to be repaired. Both picnic pavilions were refurbished. The walkways in the park are now lighted. On-site parking is available at the eastern edge of the park. A building with bathroom facilities was added.

**Activity:**

ATHLETIC FIELD  
Camp recreation dept

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Baseball  
 Soccer  
 GENERAL FIELD  
 General activity, Soccer

### Conditions and Key Issues

As this park has undergone significant improvements since 2001, it is in excellent shape. To the extent possible, fields are rested. An unresolved issue is the drainage problem in the left field of the softball field that is due to a design flaw.

### Field Conditions:

ATHLETIC FIELD - Filippello athletic field is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests. The Filippello athletic field is the only sand-based field in Watertown. The soil mix contains plastic fibers designed to add tensile strength to the turf grass. Sand based fields drain exceptionally well when properly constructed. Unfortunately, the outfield behind 2<sup>nd</sup> base and the left field foul areas tend to retain water. As a result, irrigation of this field must be closely monitored. At the time of this inspection, the left field foul line area was holding water, but not to the detriment of the turf. Present irrigation practices should be continued. As this field matures, it will be critical to core aerate at least once, and preferably twice per year. The thatch layer is over ¾ of an inch and should be managed appropriately. Annual core aeration will maintain the thatch, compaction and drainage at optimal levels.

#### ATHLETIC FIELD

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	9	Excellent
Thatch	> ¾ inch	
Weeds	9	Less than 1% coverage-some clover
Compaction	5	Optimum for athletic fields—difficult to assess sub grade based on plastic fibers
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields-plastic fibers help to hold turf - resilience
Disease		None Observed
Insects		None Observed

GENERAL FIELD - Filippello -General Activity athletic field is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests. The right field foul area is excessively wet. Standing water was observed. Overall there is optimum moisture in the soil profile. Monitoring of the irrigation system should continue to ensure there are no irrigation breaks or malfunctioning sprinkler heads in the right field area.

#### GENERAL FIELD

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	9	Excellent
Thatch	> 3/4 inch	Excellent for sports programs
Weeds	1	Less than 1% weeds-some clover

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Compaction	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		None Observed
Insects		None Observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Arlington St sidewalk at Berkeley

The existing sidewalks have substantial cross slopes, are narrow or impassable, and curb ramps do not conform to regulations.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure a minimum of 3' wide accessible route with a cross slope of 2% or less.
- Install depressed corner curb ramps OR
- Raise the crosswalk across Berkeley to sidewalk level.

#### Arlington St. sidewalk

The sidewalk has a cross slope from 6.5% - 7.3%.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Bring sidewalk into compliance with a cross slope of 2% or less.

#### Southwest entrance into park

The intersection of asphalt, concrete, and decorative pavers is prone to vertical displacements. Numerous tripping hazards were observed. There is also a cross slope of over 5% on the sidewalk. No accessible on-street parking is designated.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Provide accessible on-street parking.
- Reduce cross slope to 2% or less.
- Repair surfaces accordingly.

#### Bench near Southwest entrance

People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend 3' on either side of the bench.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create clear space.

#### Benches facing water feature

People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend 3' on either side of the bench.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create clear space.

#### Public restrooms

While the restrooms are frequently used, they are not accessible. The areas of non compliance are outlined below:

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Door pressure exceeds tolerances;
- Sink does not have appropriate clear space;
- Sink plumbing protrudes into knee space
- Grab bars are at different heights;
- Slope of floor to drain exceeds 2%; and

- Interior door clearance is problematic

#### Walkway adjacent to public restrooms

A water valve shut-off is protruding a couple of inches above the walk surface and is a major tripping hazard.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair surfaces accordingly.

#### Walkway from restroom to parking lot at Berkeley Street

The walkway is heavily traveled. It has a walk slope in excess of 5% (7.5% in one area) for over 50' and in some locations has a cross slope in excess of 5.2%.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Either make walkway conform to walkway specifications or construct to ramp specifications.

#### Parking area at Berkeley Street

Parking area does not have an appropriate pavement markings or signs for two spots. The spaces adjacent to the park walkway could be ideal for two van accessible parking spaces sharing an 8' wide access aisle.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish accessible parking spaces.

#### Bench near East of water feature

The bushes are overhanging the benches and need to be trimmed. People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend 3' on either side of the bench.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create clear space.

#### Path heading east from water feature towards Grove St parking lot and play structure

The walkway is delightfully wide and used by walkers, roller bladers, runners, and cyclists. Behind the retaining wall, whose height serves no obvious purpose, there is a favored and active hideout for youth (evidenced by debris).

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair surfaces accordingly.

#### Junction of paths heading to/from Grove St parking lot, the play structure and the Western side of the park

Where the paths intersect, there is no level landing. For the path heading to the parking lot, the path exceeds 5%.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Regrade pathways so that they do not exceed 5% or if impossible, design a section as a ramp (1:12 max,

5' level landings every 30' and handrails).

**Parking lot accessed from Grove St.**

The parking lot does not have appropriately located, striped, and signed accessible parking spaces. The existing curb ramps are non-compliant.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Replace existing curb ramps.
- Establish accessible parking spaces.
- Install a curb ramp adjacent to the spaces if they are not moved to an alternate location. Establish accessible parking spaces.

**Drinking fountain adjacent to parking lot**

The junction of the asphalt to the pavers is a tripping hazard.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair surfaces accordingly.

**Sitting and field overlook by Grove St. parking lot**

The partially area has asphalt pavers and multiple benches. At one point it was possible to see all the way to the ball field however, the bushes have been allowed to grow to a significant height and now block much of the view. The tree grates are in poor condition and are too small for the trees. The pavers are completely uneven as a result of both time and tree roots.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair surfaces accordingly.

**Walkway to play structure and pavilion**

The walkway has a slope of over 15%.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Unless a walkway with a 5% slope can be created, the second walkway should be redesigned as a ramp, with the appropriate landings and handrails.
- The accessible route at the pavilion should be leveled.
- The play structure is in need of some upgrades including an accessible surface, additional play elements, and transfer locations.

**Basketball Court**

From a perspective of appeal and security, the court is far from attractive with no active surroundings, largely invisible from the street, and is bordered by an abandoned industrial site and the Town's apparent recycling center as its adjacent neighbors. The stench of garbage and rotting compost was substantial. The court is not easily accessed by people with mobility disabilities because chained gates block the accessible routes. Seating and shade opportunities are quite limited. The court also has some ongoing drainage and runoff problems as well as non-compliant catch basin covers. Backboard poles have no padded wrapping.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route to and into the court from both ends.
- Install accessible grate covers.
- Address drainage problems.

**Walkway from parking lot, past basketball courts, to Grove St.**

The path varies in width and has some significant cross

slope problems. Trees also need to be headed up.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Remove existing walkway and regrade area so that a new path will be less than 5%. Cross slopes should be absolutely minimized and consider a level resting area with a bench along path. The new path should be as wide as it is today.
- Head up trees to 8' so that when wet, they do not hang below 80".

**Stairs from water feature to picnic pavilion area**

The stairs are wide and shallow making them perfect for sitting on. However, a handrail in the center would benefit many.

***Minimum Compliance***

- All stairs must have a handrail

**Grills in picnic pavilion area**

The grills that are mounted behind the retaining wall are significantly outside of the allowable reach ranges.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Features must be located within accessible reach ranges.

**Jogging path from picnic pavilion to play structure**

The path is in good condition but, has trees that need to be headed up.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Head up trees to 8' so that when wet, they do not hang below 80".

**Jogging path heading West toward flag pole and play structure**

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route to one table and grill.
- Table tops should extend a minimum of 19" clear space from the leg, have 30" of clear width and be at a height of not less than 27" to the underside of the table top.
- Concrete pads should extend beyond their current dimensions to provide a stable seating area at the ends.
- Adjacent soil should be level at or slightly above the concrete pads to minimize vertical displacement and tripping hazards and allow access to table ends.

**Jogging path at walkway to play structure**

The junction of two materials has a vertical lip in excess of a 1/2".

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair accordingly.

**Play structure entrance**

The entrance requires a 90 degree turn and is too narrow for a double stroller to easily navigate through. Oddly, the fencing appears to have been installed 6" into the concrete pad.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Make entrance comply with accessible entrance requirements.

**Play structure transfer location**

This location is missing the bottom transfer step.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Reinstall transfer step.

**Entrance from play structure to field**

The gate has the same poor design as the previous one

however this design is complicated by its location in a corner and adjacent to some benches.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Make entrance comply with accessible entrance requirements.

**Play structure surface**

The surface has experienced some degradation but has not been repaired.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Logging path along Arlington St.**

The path is in good condition but as the photos depict, have trees that need to be headed up.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Head up trees to 8' so that when wet, they do not hang below 80".

**Northwest entrance into park**

Like the Southwest entrance, the intersection of asphalt, concrete, and decorative pavers is prone to vertical displacements. Numerous tripping hazards were observed.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Intersection of Arlington, Coolidge Hill, Crawford and Nichols**

The intersection is complicated by the intersection of several streets, each at different grades, along with a railroad track crossing. The existing sidewalks curb ramps and crossings are at best, difficult to navigate. The lengthy crossing distances and excessive curb radii are contributing factors. The existing signals appear to be several decades old.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Install accessible curb ramps and sidewalks.

**Additional Recommendations**

1. Address drainage issues in the left field of the softball field. Designer should address and rectify this situation
2. Design former incinerator site for recreation. Coordinate the design with Mt. Auburn Cemetery, owner of the adjacent parcel
3. Remove yellow retaining wall related to former solar bathrooms
4. Repair damaged basketball court
5. Add electrical outlet to sidewall of utility room

**HOWE PARK**



<b>Address:</b>	Corner of Pleasant and Bacon Streets
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

**Description:**

This hillside park overlooking Pleasant Street serves as a neighborhood playground. Prior to the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan the site had received considerable renovations including turf and drainage systems. A tot lot was added in 1996 and a rubberized safety surface in 2005. A walkway from French Street to the tot lot has been added to provide disabled access. The small, sloping field is not suitable or intended for field sports. The site has one basketball court which was replaced since the last update to this plan. New trees have been added to the park and in the future they will provide shade for the tot lot. Off site street parking is available on Homer, French, and Bacon Streets.

**Conditions and Key Issues:**

The playground is in overall good condition; recommendations for improvements are noted below.

## ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

### Walkway from Homer & French Streets to Bacon Street

Apart from some vertical displacements, the existing walkway is in fairly good condition. While the walkway connects to the play structure, there is no connection to the basketball court (Indeed, there is not even a sign pointing toward the court). In most places, the walkway slope is at or below 5%. Additionally, there are low hanging branches.

#### *Minimum compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements.
- Regrade adjacent landscape grade such that it drops off no more than 5% for at least 10" beyond the walkway width.
- Head up trees to 8' so that when wet, they do not hang below 80".

### Bacon Street sidewalk

The severely deteriorated 3' wide sidewalk was made out of asphalt with no curbing. Its condition and narrowness discourages use by pedestrians, though such behavior may be acceptable because of the limited traffic volumes. Where the walkway meets the sidewalk, there is a tripping hazard and a cross slope exceeding 8%.

#### *Minimum compliance*

- Repair tripping hazard.
- Remove section of walkway and replace with a level landing. The walkway should join the sidewalk in a parallel curb ramp that will also provide access to the street.
- Replace existing sidewalk with a 5' wide sidewalk designed with a cross slope of less than 2%.

### Sidewalk along Pleasant Street

Although Pleasant Street experiences moderate traffic throughout the day, the speeds are often excessive. The sidewalk is significantly degraded including curb stones which have sunk considerably. Curb ramps do not exist. There is no pedestrian crossing to the MDC walkway.

#### *Minimum Compliance*

- Provide an accessible route.
- Provide curb ramps and crosswalks.

### Entrance into play structure

Currently, the entrance opening is narrower than the walkway leading to it or the pad on the inside of it. The gate is not accessible and is likely unnecessary.

#### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure a 3' wide opening.
- Make gate accessible.

### Play structure, surface and bench

The existing surface is not accessible and there is a

considerable step down to the surface. At the bench, there has been considerable erosion such that the bench is over 22" H. The play structure has some problems including a lack of shade, the dark colored slide facing due south, some graffiti and inaccessible entrances. There is a secondary gate that could connect to a 5% walkway to the basketball court.

#### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route.
- Bring play structure and surface into compliance.
- Make gate accessible.

### Route to basketball court

Currently, there is no accessible route to the court..

#### *Minimum compliance*

- Establish an accessible route between entrances, basketball court and play-ground.

### Basketball court

While the court is not on an accessible route. It can be made more accessible and attractive. For instance, the benches and trash receptacle could be located on a new accessible walkway along the court's edge. Likewise, a section of the curb surrounding the court could be ramped.

#### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route to the court and other elements and install a ramp/remove asphalt curb.

### Additional Recommendations:

1. This site should not be utilized for scheduled sports practices because it is small and sloping. Field sports practices would likely result in quickly deteriorating conditions. The site has no on-site parking, nor is there much on-street parking in the abutting neighborhood. The parking arrangement and small area makes use of this site generally limited to the surrounding neighborhood. This park offers an excellent play area for the neighborhood's younger children as well as both passive and active recreation opportunities for adults.
2. Install an irrigation system
3. Color seal the court area
4. Extend fence line
5. Add handicapped parking
6. Replace trees that were taken down along Bacon Street
7. Add benches

## LINEAR PARK

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<b>Address:</b>	Between municipal parking lot at Town Hall and Waverley Avenue
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	Two Family
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### Description:

This is a paved tree-lined linear path that runs from the municipal parking lot at Town Hall, past the Boys and Girls Club, across Whites Avenue to Waverley Avenue.

### Recommendations:

1. Install curb cuts at the street intersections
2. Make width of path uniform
3. Install lighting and prune overgrown plantings
4. Consider extension of path to Charles River via Howard Street
5. Change zoning to Open Space Conservancy

## LOWELL SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

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<b>Address:</b>	Corner of George Street and Lowell Avenue
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### Description:

The area behind the Lowell School serves as the school's playground, a heavily used little league/softball practice field, and as a neighborhood play area for younger children. The site provides one small little league/softball field, one basketball court, and two tot lot play areas. There are two handicap parking spaces near the playground. The tot lots were reconstructed in 2001, and both received a rubberized safety surface in 2005. The tot lot equipment near the front door of the school was purchased by the P.T.O. and is in need of redesign. The basketball court was also reconstructed during renovations. A retaining wall, new benches and a backstop along with a new infield were installed in 2000. An irrigation system was added to the playing field in

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2001. The site utilizes the school's parking lot area.

### Activity:

School recess activities  
Physical education classes  
Watertown recreation sports leagues.

### Conditions and Key Issues:

The playground is at a lower grade than the Lowell School, which is on a hill near the western edge of the site. The areas between the school and the playground demonstrate moderate erosion as a result of children wearing the surface turf into dirt pathways as they go to and from the playground. Improper drainage at the school may also contribute to the erosion of this hillside.

### Field Conditions:

Lowell School playground is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	9	Excellent
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	4	Overall good-Center Field-clover/chickweed
Compaction	5-6	Optimum for athletic fields
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		Brown Patch. Not active—no turf loss
Insects		None observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Sidewalk, curb ramp, and crosswalk at Lowell School entrance

The existing concrete has degraded significantly, including on the ramp to the school (not shown). There is a confluence of slopes that could conceivably be reduced.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Replace existing surfaces and minimize slope conditions.

#### Crosswalk from play structure and sidewalk along school

There are no curb ramps at either end of the crosswalk. Portions of the sidewalk are uneven or have significant vertical and horizontal displacement. These are tripping hazards.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install curb ramps.
- Repair surfaces accordingly.

#### Accessible parking spaces opposite main school entrance

People who want to use these spaces will find that they are not appropriately dimensioned (too narrow), signed, and have cross slopes that exceed maximum tolerances.

Also note the more than 1" vertical displacement (bump) where the access aisle meets the sidewalk.

##### *Minimum compliance*

- Repair vertical displacement.
- Establish accessible parking spaces.

#### Sidewalk from accessible parking to York Street

The existing sidewalk has a cross slopes up to 2.7%.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure that cross slopes do not exceed 2%.

#### Intersection of York & Lowell Streets

The curb ramps should have been constructed as parallel curb ramps. Apex curb ramps, presuming a 6" curb height and a 4' level landing at the top, can not be used in sidewalks narrower than 10'. Also there is a drainage problem.

##### *Minimum compliance*

- Install accessible curb ramps.

#### Sidewalk along York Street

The sidewalk is in fairly good condition though it narrows at the trunks of trees and has some vertical displacements. Some tree branches are hanging below eye level.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Head up trees to at least 80" where trees overhang path.

- Repair or repave asphalt to eliminate vertical displacements.

**Walkway from Aldrich Rd. Parking Lot to Basketball Court**

Park users entering at this location are confronted by low hanging branches, significant vertical displacements (tripping hazards), a bench that is at the top of the sloped walkway where it blocks the level landing, and benches that are too low.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Head up trees to at least 80" where trees overhang path.
- Repair or repave asphalt to eliminate vertical displacements.

**Ball diamond and bleachers**

Currently, there is no accessible route to reach either the ball diamond or the bleachers above it.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish accessible route to bleachers and ball diamond.

**Ball diamond dugouts**

The existing dugouts are not connected to an accessible route.

***Minimum compliance***

- Link the dugouts to an accessible route. Relocate the trash cans into the corners of the dugouts and out of the path of travel. Repair vertical displacements as soon as possible.

**Basketball court**

The court, bench, and trash can are not located on an accessible route. There is little shade for the basketball court. One of the backboard poles and the telephone pole do not have padded wrapping.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route to the court and other elements.

**Bench facing Southwest at play structure**

The bench pad is not wide enough to provide a 3' wide clear space alongside the bench. There is considerable erosion alongside the bench where there is an opening in the fence to access the play structure.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route to the bench.

**Play structure walkway**

The play structure walkway was selectively widened but the new pads are not level with the existing concrete. Further, there are expansion joints wider than 1/2" and the widening may not provide adequate drainage.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair all vertical displacements. Fill all cracks with flexible caulking so that they are flush with the adjacent surfaces.

**Bench in play structure**

People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend 3' on either side of the bench. Minimum Compliance

- Create clear space.
- Ensure landscape grade is flush with the concrete.

**Lowell St Entrance into play structure**

The entrance is slightly larger than others such as

Filippello Park because the vertical stand alone element is pulled back. However, the triangular concrete pad is not wide enough for an accessible route.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Ensure that the element is removed so that it does not block the accessible route OR enlarge the concrete pad.

**George St. at Lowell St. (Looking North)**

The existing sidewalk is narrow and has multiple vertical displacements.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair sidewalk accordingly.

**George St and rear driveway of Lowell School**

The existing sidewalk, curb ramps and crosswalks are poorly designed. Complicating matters is a catch basin whose foundation may have partially failed.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Bring sidewalk and curb ramps into compliance.

**Parking area behind school**

Currently, the sidewalk is impassable and the accessible parking spaces are not appropriately identified.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Trim greenery to be clear of the accessible route.
- Establish appropriate striping and signage for accessible parking spaces.

**Walkway and sidewalk adjacent to swings**

The intersection of the walkway and sidewalk has a cross slope over 2.5%.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Ensure that cross slopes do not exceed 2%.

**Benches near swings**

People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend 3' on either side of the bench.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Create clear space.

**Additional Recommendations:**

Field management also needs to be vigorously enforced to prevent the field's decline. Recommended management measures include: reducing the number of scheduled activities to a level below the point of field degradation, restrict or bar teams that fail to use the field properly, and require teams to contribute to the field's maintenance.

**Lowell Park:**

1. Maintain turf conditions as part of town's maintenance program
2. Improve areas at each end of the retaining wall of J. Malcolm Whitney Baseball Field where there is erosion
3. Install barrier at east side of park to keep balls from going onto George Street

**Lowell School Playground:**

1. Redesign tot lot at the front of the school
2. Improve area by front entrance of school
3. Consider installing an irrigation system to front lawn of school
4. Add bathroom facilities

## MOXLEY PLAYGROUND



<b>Address:</b>	Corner of Westminster Avenue and Bemis Street
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

### Description:

This large multi-use site serves as a major field sport resource for the Town. The site provides one full sized soccer/football field, one baseball field, two tennis courts (with lights), one basketball court (with lights), a batting cage, and two tot lot areas. A field house/locker room building was rebuilt in 2001. The two tot lots were built in 2003. One is designed for youngsters 2 to 5 years of age and the other for youngsters 5 to 12 years of age. Both tot lots have rubberized safety surfaces. The site is situated directly to the south of the Watertown Middle School. Parking is available both on-street and on-site at the school's parking lot. The field received major renovations in 2001. The field has an irrigation system that was improved during the building of the field house.

### Activity:

High School Soccer-varsity, junior varsity  
 Youth Soccer-spring fall  
 Baseball-Babe Ruth, junior varsity  
 Grade 1-8 gym classes  
 Flag tag-inner city league  
 Summer Camp-recreation dept  
 August-Pop Warner football

### Conditions and Key Issues:

Although the site has one of the most utilized fields in the Town the extensive maintenance activities appear to be holding the field's overall condition above what would be expected given this enormous use. The field's heavy usage and prominence may pose an advantage over other sites in that teams that use the field must use them with the least damage possible; degradation of the fields would not be tolerated by subsequent players. Under this scenario field management is implemented more aggressively, and consistently, than at other sites due to the need for continuous intervention and scheduling by the Recreation Department and Public Works to respond to user needs and complaints.

It is recommended that the intensity of field use be decreased if field degradation is to be prevented. This decrease in use will allow for proper field rejuvenation cycles.

### Field Conditions:

Moxley Playground is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

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Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	8	Very good
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	3-4	Clover/crabgrass
Compaction	7	Moderately compacted
Tensile	8	Good tensile strength
Disease		None observed
Insects		None Observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Sidewalk at the corner of Main and Westminster Streets

Pedestrians walking along the Westminster Street sidewalk do not have a clear path of travel because of the broken, uneven and poorly patched sidewalks.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair surface accordingly.
- Replace curb ramps at crosswalk.

#### Southwest entrance along Westminster St Sidewalk

The existing entrance appears to be heavily used however there is no accessible route from this gate to any of the features within the park including the batting cage, ball diamond or the pedestrian connection to the rail trail running from Waverly Street to Saltonstall Park. The batting cage gate and ground surface is not accessible.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route to all features.
- Make gate accessible.

#### Potential walkway between from batting cage, past monument to ball diamond and Waverly Street

The walkway could run parallel to the fence line but just north of the monument and tree line. It would be beyond the boundaries of the soccer field and well beyond the baseball foul line.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route connecting all of the features.

#### Pedestrian route from ball diamond to Waverly Street

Park users entering/exiting at this location are confronted by low hanging branches and significant vertical displacements (tripping hazards). The area also appears to be used as an unofficial parking location. As such, the current entry point is challenging but can easily be fixed. The sidewalks on the West side of Waverly Street are deteriorated and significantly overgrown.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Head up trees to at least 8' where trees overhang path.
- Eliminate vertical displacements and tripping hazards.
- Repair or replace sidewalks as needed.

#### Pedestrian crossing of Waverly Street at rail trail

While this is an obvious pedestrian connection and one that should be encouraged, it is not marked even with a crosswalk. It also needs an accessible curb ramp on the west side. The crossing and the accompanying traffic volume is similar to many along the Minuteman Trail that runs from Alewife to Bedford.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install curb ramps.

#### Ball diamond S. dugout

Presently, the ball diamond and its dug-out seating areas are not easily accessed by people with disabilities because they do not link to an accessible route and the concrete pads do not extend to the traditional standing points.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route to the dugouts.
- Address tripping hazards.

#### Bleachers at Ball Diamond

The bleachers are considerably worn and not appropriately located.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- The bleachers should be located on an accessible route with adequate clear space around them for people to sit alongside and in front of them.

#### Ball diamond E. dugout

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route to the dugouts.
- Address tripping hazards.

#### Stairs to Linden Street

The existing stairs are uneven (the top step is 9 1/2" high), lack handrails, and there is nothing to prevent running fielders from falling down them.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- The stairs, if worked on significantly, would need to be brought into full compliance.

#### Walkway to Bemis Street

There is a tripping hazard because the mulch will never be flush with adjacent surfaces

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Address tripping hazards.

#### Grassy strip between play surface and walkway

When the accessible play surface was installed, the grass

adjacent to it was not graded appropriately such that it has a rut and then juts up creating both a tripping hazard and potential for a twisted ankle.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Address tripping hazards.

**Corner of Bemis and Waverly Streets**

The intersection is utilized by families, children and senior citizens to either reach Moxley Playground or the adjacent school. The existing curb ramps are not compliant and there is no accessible route to the apartment building.

**Minimum compliance**

- Install accessible curb ramps.

**Walkway heading to school crossing of Bemis Street**

The existing walkway has a running slope of over 8% and has some cross slope conditions.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Ensure that the walkway does not exceed 5% or if it is treated as a ramp, it cannot exceed 8.3% and must have railings.
- Remove tripping hazards

**School crossing at Bemis Street**

The sidewalk has some cross slope conditions as well as vertical displacements. At the crossing, a curb ramp is missing on the school side and on the Moxley side, a driveway curb cut acts as a curb ramp. There is no level landing at its top before it starts descending as the park walkway.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Install accessible curb ramps.

**Surface and seating conditions around play structures**

While visiting the play structures, all of the shaded benches were in use and the sunny benches were avoided. The concrete surface was in good condition apart from some minor vertical displacements

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair vertical displacements.

**Tennis Court Gate adjacent to play structures**

Despite frequent usage, the courts do not have formalized entry points on at least two sides. The formal entry is via the basketball court. This entry point is challenging.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Make gate accessible.

**Edge at larger play structure**

The play structure and accessible surface is in great condition however this corner has an erosion problem which is now a tripping hazard.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Connect from the SW entry of smaller play structure to the field house**

Despite a clear desire line worn into some areas of the landscape there is no formal walkway between the two areas. In fact, there is no accessible route from either of

the play structures to the field house.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route to all features.

**Walkway between field house and basket ball court**

The existing walkway has eroded, is uneven and its slope exceeds 5% but it is not designed as a ramp. It narrows at the gate. The gate is inaccessible.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route to all features.
- Make gate accessible.

**Walkway from field house to Westminster St.**

The existing walkway has a 10% running slope and a cross slope of over 4.5%. The walkway needs to be replaced.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route from the field house to the Westminster sidewalk.

**Intersection of Westminster and Bemis Streets**

The existing sidewalks have cross slopes and vertical displacements in excess of maximum tolerances. The existing apex curb ramps are not compliant and are worsened by the corner radii.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Install accessible curb ramps.
- Ensure sidewalks have cross slopes of less than 2%.
- Repair vertical displacements.

**Sidewalk along Westminster**

The existing sidewalk is breaking up, has some cross slope concerns and the adjacent 18" green strip is not flush with the sidewalk.

**Minimum Compliance**

- All features must be located on an accessible route.
- Repair surfaces accordingly.

**Additional Recommendations:**

1. Repair cracks in surface of court area
2. Color seal court area
3. Address water runoff issue at field house roof
4. Maintain turf conditions as part of town's maintenance program
5. Add electrical outlet at batting cage
6. Add handicapped parking spaces
7. Add storage container behind baseball backstop

**O'CONNELL PLAYGROUND**



<b>Address:</b>	Corner of Mt. Auburn and Boylston Streets
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

**Description:**

This site serves as a playground area for the Hosmer School as well as a field sport space for several local teams. The site also functions as a neighborhood tot lot. The site has one multi-use soccer/field hockey field, two softball/baseball fields, one basketball court, and two tot lots. Parking is provided on-site at the school's parking lot. The site last had major renovations or improvements in 2003 as part of the school renovation project. A new disabled access tot lot was installed in 2003 with a rubberized safety surface. This tot lot was built by a combined effort of students, teachers and parents. A new basketball court was built as a part of the school renovation project. A batting cage was erected in 2000. An irrigation system and new backstop were added to the field in 2001. During the fall, late spring, and summer months the field areas are used every day for scheduled team sports and school gym classes.

**Activity:**

Soccer  
Baseball

**Conditions and Key Issues:**

The shade trees at the tot lot are in poor health due to poor siting.

**Field Conditions:**

O'Connell athletic field is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	9	Very Good
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	3	Clover and Plantain throughout
Compaction	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		None observed
Insects		Several patches of yellowing with grubs observed

**ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:**

**Mt. Auburn St. Sidewalk**

Pedestrians walking along the Mt. Auburn Street sidewalk do not have clear path of travel because of a variety of vertical displacements (tripping hazards) and eroded concrete

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Repair accordingly.*

**East entrance from Mt. Auburn St.**

The existing entrance is informal - an opening in the fence, and is not readily visible. The entrance is not accessible and does not connect to an accessible route serving the features within the facility.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Continue the concrete through the opening so there is a 4' deep pad connecting to the phone.*
- *Ensure that the adjacent landscaping is raised to be flush with the pad.*
- *Establish an accessible route to all features.*

**Mid-block crossing of Mt. Auburn Street**

The existing curb ramps are not in compliance and slope conditions are worsened by the high crown of the road. Using bulb-outs, the slopes may be minimized and the crossing distance could be shortened.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Replace curb ramp on park side.*
- *Use a combination curb ramp so that sidewalk width is maintained.*
- *Make opposite curb ramp compliant.*

**Park bench along Mt. Auburn**

Despite having a good location and shade, the existing bench is not easily accessed and has significant erosion under it.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish an accessible route to the bench.*

**Dirt lot and field entrance at Mt. Auburn & Boylston Streets**

The lot appears to be overflow parking. Access to the field for mowers occurs here. It is unclear what the shipping container is used for or why it is placed there.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish an accessible route to the field entrance.*

**Potential walkway from field entrance to dugouts**

The features are not connected to an accessible route.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Provide an accessible route to all features.*

**SW ball diamond dugout pads and benches**

Currently, the ball diamond and its dug-out seating areas are not easily accessed by people with disabilities. There is erosion at the ends of the concrete dugout pads resulting in 1"+ tripping hazard. People with disabilities cannot traverse the area behind the backstop because the concrete does not extend around the back stop. When the dugout pads were poured, their design did not

anticipate the preferred standing location. Further, the brown gear box's present location narrows the walkway.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Install an accessible route connecting all features.*
- *Repair surfaces and repair vertical displacements.*

**Southwest gate to ball diamond**

The existing passageway is awkward, significantly rutted and is a barrier for many people with disabilities.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Create an accessible entrance that connects with an accessible route to all amenities on site.*

**Batting cage & scoreboard**

The batting cage and scoreboard are not connected to an accessible route. The ground surface in the cage and the gate is not accessible. The scoreboard is not mounted at an accessible height. Given its distance from the bleachers, the board's lettering size is more appropriate for a viewing distance of 50-75'.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish an accessible route to all features, including batting cage.*
- *Increase font size on sign.*
- *Relocate gearbox and create a 5' wide accessible route to the scoreboard so everyone can keep score.*
- *Make gate accessible.*

**Bleachers and field entrance**

There is no accessible route connecting the courts to the bleachers from either the dugout or the park entrance shown below.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish an accessible route between the facilities.*
- *Add a concrete pad under the bleachers and extend it 4' on all sides of the bleachers.*

**West entrance to play structure**

The entrance does not connect to an accessible route.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Re-grade landscaping to be flush.*
- *Maintain periodically.*

**Play structure surface**

The play structure surface is accessible however, in several locations it has worn away, or sunk below the adjacent walkway. Each situation is a tripping or twisted ankle hazard.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Repair accordingly.*

**Play structure**

The play structure is in good condition and has numerous play elements at both ground and elevated levels. There is a missing transfer step/station.

***Minimum compliance***

- *Install transfer stations in accordance with ADAAG 15.6.*

**Connection from play structure to basketball court**

The current walk surface is uneven and unstable. A

person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in mesh on gate.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route to court.
- Make gate accessible.

**Walkway around play structure**  
There is an apparent drainage and run-off problem here.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Maintain an obstacle free accessible route.

**Path around play structure**  
The accessible route is excessively narrow; in some cases, it is only 3' wide. The landscaping surface is no longer level with the walkway, creating a tripping hazard.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Walkways less than 60" wide are required to have frequent 60" X 60" passing locations.
- Re-grade adjacent landscape grade such that it drops off no more than 5% for at least 10" beyond the walkway width.

**Picnic table facing play structure**  
This attractively designed picnic area that offers a mix of sun and shade!

**Minimum Compliance**

- Re-grade adjacent landscaping to be flush with walkway.

**Curb ramp and crosswalk at NW corner of Winthrop and Hancock**  
While this curb ramp is fairly new, there is a vertical lip at the bottom and there is a significant run-off problem from the adjacent landscaping. Also, the material used for the crosswalk markings is slippery.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair all vertical displacements.

**Basketball court**  
The basketball court is not connected to an accessible route.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Provide an accessible route to all features.

**Parking lot at basketball court**  
Parking is provided but there are no accessible parking spaces.

**Minimum Compliance**

- If these spaces are for public use, establish accessible parking spaces including van accessible spaces.
- Provide an accessible route to the court.

**Winthrop Street sidewalk**  
The existing sidewalk is significantly degraded, has many vertical displacements and is overgrown.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Repair accordingly.

**Additional Recommendations:**

1. Color seal basketball court and install fence to separate it from the parking lot
2. Install fencing around court area with gate or opening from tot lot
3. Repair depression caused by pipe giving way in new tot lot (Contractor's responsibility)
4. Repair rubberized safety surface at tot lot (Contractor's responsibility)
5. Improve turf conditions (part of the Town's maintenance program)
6. Replace Red Oaks as necessary; tree planting on north and south side of park
7. Entrances to park need improvement
8. Add bathroom facilities
9. Add electrical outlet to batting cage

**SALTONSTALL PARK**



<b>Address:</b>	Corner of Main Street and Whites Avenue
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Article 97

**Description:**

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

This is a multi-use site located directly behind and beside Town Hall. Metered parking is available. It is heavily used for a variety of sports as well as for casual recreation due to its centrality. The Park provides a paved memorial area that is used for outdoor concerts in the summer months and provides shade for weary pedestrians. Facilities include one basketball court, one tot lot, one lighted softball field, and several park benches. The Boys & Girls Club building is located on the Whites Avenue side of the Park. The site is directly accessed from Main Street and via Linear Park which has its entrance near the Boys & Girls Club building. The field has lighting for evening sports.

### **Activity:**

Baseball

### **Conditions and Key Issues:**

The present conditions of the passive component of this Park are fair. While the trees, park benches, and memorials appear to be in good condition, the concrete paved surfaces are in need of immediate care.

In 2001 the field received major renovations, an irrigation system, backstop and new player's benches. Subsequently, the field has received an intensive program of turf management to address soil compactions issues that arose during its reconstruction. Many trees were added to the park, including several Cherry trees. A new tot lot for 2 to 5 year olds was constructed in 2003. This area has a rubberized safety surface. Work was done on the plaza to improve its condition.

### **Field Conditions:**

Saltonstall athletic field is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	9	Excellent
Thatch	1/2 - 3/4 inch	Optimum
Weeds	2	Overall excellent some clover and crabgrass
Compaction	1-2	Very hard subsurface—sub grade contains clay/fines which may impede drainage and increase compaction.
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		None observed
Insects		None Observed

Saltonstall should be core aerated at least once per year. Core aeration will remove turf plugs, decrease compaction and improve drainage.

### **ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:**

#### **Recommendations:**

The central location of this park makes it subject to extensive use; indeed, the field area is used almost every day and night. Such extensive field use requires extraordinary maintenance and management to prevent degradation. The field area at present is in very good

condition. Intensive management techniques need to continue in order to prevent future degradation of this field. At a minimum, the number of permits issued for field use should be held to a level that will prevent overall field decline. Rejuvenation cycles should also be implemented. The Basketball Court needs resurfacing.

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

The passive park area to the side of Town Hall needs resurfacing, preferably with materials more resistant to adverse weather conditions than the current concrete paver system. Inlaid brick paving would provide both a surface that is resistant to subsurface change and allow easy replacement of individual bricks rather than entire

concrete slabs or bituminous surfaces. Brick paving would also offer significant aesthetic advantages, fitting in well with surrounding municipal buildings.

### SULLIVAN PLAYGROUND



<b>Address:</b>	Corner of Mt. Auburn and Boylston Streets
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW/Recreation Department
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	See Appendix A
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

#### Description:

This site is located between the Coolidge School and Mount Auburn Street. Arlington Street is the western edge of the site. The Coolidge School is currently vacant. Facilities provided at the site are: one small Little League/softball field, one tot lot, and one basketball court. The field area is used approximately four evenings per week and numerous practices are held on the weekends. In 2002, the park received major renovations. The playing field was renovated and an irrigation system, outfield fence, ball field backstop and new player's benches were installed. The basketball court was rebuilt and many trees were added to the park. A tot lot providing disabled access was installed with a rubberized safety surface.

#### Activity:

Baseball

#### Conditions and Key Issues:

The site is constrained by its location. High flying softballs pose a hazard to vehicles on adjacent streets and to children playing at the site. For this reason the softball area is restricted for practice for the youngest children. The basketball court has a high fence to keep stray balls from the busy street intersection.

#### Sullivan Playground

Sullivan School playground is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	5	Excessive wear/damage

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	1	Significant clover and crabgrass
Compaction	3	Very Compacted
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		Brown patch. Not active—no turf loss
Insects		None observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Playground entry gate at Mt. Auburn St.

The gate lacks a solid surface at bottom 18" of the push side of gate. A person using a wheelchair will get foot rests caught in mesh.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Make gate accessible.

#### Bench facing play structure

People using wheelchairs or scooters cannot sit alongside their companions because the concrete pad does not extend on either side of the bench.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create clear space.
- Head up trees to at least 80" where trees overhang path.

#### Path around play structure

Low hanging branches are a problem. The bench seat is narrow and there is no pull-off space at ends of bench.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair benches and head up trees to at least 80" where trees overhang path.

#### Path around play structure

The accessible route narrows considerably to 3' wide or less in some spots and the play structure surface is no longer level with the walkway, creating a tripping hazard.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair accordingly.

#### Play structure

The play structure offers a variety of engaging elements at the surface and above however there are few transfer stations. The structure is partly shaded but the west facing slide can still be hot to the touch.

##### *Recommendation*

- Add two transfer stations, one at each end.
- Provide additional grab bars at the top of the slides.
- Investigate additional locations for shade trees.

#### Walkways through the play structure

The walkway is quite narrow and the walkways have cracks and vertical displacements greater than 1/4" (tripping hazards).

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

#### Walkways to ball field and basketball court

The walkway has cracks and vertical displacements greater

than 1/4" (tripping hazards).

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

#### Walkway in front of drinking fountain

The walkway has cracks and vertical displacements greater than 1/4" (tripping hazards).

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

#### Junction of walkway to basketball courts

The joint has splayed and there are vertical displacements greater than 1/4" (tripping hazards).

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

#### Walkway to ball field gate

The walkway has vertical displacements greater than 1/4" (tripping hazards).

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

#### Gate into ball field

The gate does not open fully and the surface at the gate is inaccessible. The gate lacks a solid surface at bottom 18" of the push side of gate. A person using a wheelchair will get foot rests caught in mesh. Further, there is currently no accessible route from this entry gate to the score board or dugouts.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Make gate accessible.

#### Scoreboard

The scoreboard is mounted at an accessible height; however it is not located on an accessible route. Given its distance from the bleachers, the board's 2 1/2" lettering size is more appropriate for a viewing distance of 50-75'.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create a 5' wide accessible route to the scoreboard so everyone can keep score.
- Increase font size on sign.

#### Dugout - East side

The grade of the field is 1-3" below the concrete pad.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Repair vertical displacements as soon as possible.

#### Dugout - North side

The placement of the bleachers creates a pinch point with the adjacent fence, thereby blocking the accessible route to the other dugout.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Ensure there is an accessible route around the bleachers in addition to 3' wide clear spaces on either end of the bleachers.
- Repair vertical displacements accordingly.

**Walkway from bleachers to Arlington St.**

The walkway is narrow and there is not enough space to get around the bleachers. It is unclear why the walkway's width is so constricted given the width of the dugout pad and the desirability of additional space around the bleachers or room for additional bleachers.

**Minimum Compliance:**

- Maintain a minimum width of 3' accessible path of travel with one 5'x5' passing spot.

**Field entrance along Arlington St.**

The existing entry and adjacent vehicle gate have numerous obstacles including grading, cross slope, pavement deterioration, etc. The adjacent driveway apron is in complete disrepair and cannot be patched as is because even when new, it had portions which had a cross slope exceeding 14%.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible entry.
- Replace the adjacent driveway apron such that there is a minimum of a 3' path of travel with a cross slope at or less than 2%.

**Arlington St. heading to Mt. Auburn St.**

The sidewalk and street appears to have some underlying drainage problems which are undermining the sidewalk. Currently, the concrete pad is not level with the top of the curb and this is exacerbating the cross slope. The cross slope in numerous locations exceeds 2% and in some spots, approaches 5%. It is also unclear why the light pole is in the path of travel rather than along the curb or in the grass.

**Minimum Compliance**

- The sidewalk should be torn up and replaced

with a sidewalk with a cross slope at or less than 2%.

**Gear box**

There is no accessible route to the gear box.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Establish an accessible route to the box
- OR relocate the box to be along an accessible route.

**Walkway and entrance into basketball court from Mt. Auburn St.**

The existing walkway exceeds ramp slope tolerances (1:12) but is treated as a walkway. The tree branches hang at eye level.

**Minimum Compliance**

- Install an accessible walkway.
- Head up trees to 80" minimum.

**Intersection of Mt. Auburn and Arlington Sts.**

The existing pedestrian signal buttons do not comply in dimension or force required for activation. They have no audible accessible features. The existing curb ramps have a variety of violations as well as drainage problems. Finally, the combination of excessive curb radii and lengthy crossing distances create a challenging pedestrian environment.

**Minimum Compliance:**

- Replace pedestrian signals with code compliant signals.
- Bring curb ramps into compliance.

**Additional Recommendations:**

1. Given the inherent limitations of the field location and the lack of adjacent open area, extensive expansion of field activities does not appear to be advisable. The continued practice of limiting practices to younger children will help keep fly balls out of the street, but adult supervision is necessary.
2. Add bathroom facilities

VICTORY FIELD



Address: Orchard Street at Marion Road  
 Owner: Town  
 Managed By: Recreation Department  
 Public Grants: None  
 A.D.A. Accessibility: See Appendix A  
 Zoning: OSC  
 Level of Protection: Zoning

**Description:**

This large, centrally located multi-use complex is the Town's most extensive sports and recreation facility. The site provides one football field, one soccer/field hockey field, one practice area suitable for soccer and football, one lighted baseball field (with dugouts), a 400 meter track, one discus pad, a long jump area, high jump area, pole vault are, shot put area, several bleachers, five tennis courts, one basketball court, one tot lot (renovated 2003), and one field house (renovated 2001). The site is adjacent to Whitney Hill Park. The Department of Public Works facility is located at the northwest end of the site. On-site parking is available.

**Activity:**

High School Baseball  
 High School Football  
 High School Soccer

**Conditions and Key Issues:**

The central location and good condition of the facilities makes this site very popular with Town residents. Indeed, on any given night during seasonable months it is likely that there will be several residents exercising on the track and multiple games or practices taking place. The track has become extremely popular among seniors who congregate during the day and early evenings to walk. Conflicts have been noted between those using the track for walking and those using it for track practice. The location of a soccer field within the track area has also led to a hazard when the occasional stray ball or player will cross over the track.

The football stands and press box were replaced and are accessible to the disabled. The tennis and basketball courts were rebuilt, and the baseball dugouts were refurbished. The field house was renovated and is ADA compliant.

The overall football and soccer field conditions are fair, due to recent improper use. Fields are typically used every day during seasonal weather. The tot lot was reconstructed in 2003 and a rubberized safety surface was installed.

**Field Conditions:**

Victory Field is irrigated. Fertilization needs are based on the results of annual soil fertility tests. Victory Field is the centerpiece of Watertown High School Athletics. Team practice should be limited on this field, in order to protect turf quality and reduce weed infestation. In the past, the “center field” strip has been sodded to maintain turf quality. This field’s primary use should be for games. The center strip is where the majority of activity during sports games takes place and subsequently where the turf is most worn. Sodding the center strip annually replaces damaged turf and removes weed species that have colonized the weakened turf stand and increases the overall life of the sports field. This practice should continue as an economical way of maintaining overall field appearance and function.

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Turf Density/Quality	8	Very Good
Thatch	<1/2 inch	Optimum
Weeds	7	Center Field-clover/crabgrass/chickweed

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Characteristic	Rating	Comments
Compaction	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Tensile	5	Optimum for athletic fields
Disease		None observed
Insects		None Observed

### ADA Minimum Compliance Recommendations:

#### Orchard St sidewalk at DPW Yard

Both existing driveways have substantial cross slopes. The curb ramps do not fully conform to regulations.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure a minimum of 48" wide accessible route with a cross slope of 2% or less across the driveways.
- Install depressed corner curb ramps.

#### Gate to West side bleachers

A person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in mesh when pushing the gate open. The gate appears to be kept locked.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Make gate accessible.

#### Sidewalk and crossing at Channing St.

The sidewalk has a large protruding object (signal box) which impedes access and hides the walk button. The curb ramp does not have a top level landing. Across the street, the curb ramps are out of compliance and can not become compliant until the curb radii are reduced.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install parallel curb ramp in place of the existing curb ramp.
- Install compliant curb ramps at Channing Street.
- Remove protruding objects and relocate signal box.
- Install accessible signals.

#### Driveway into Victory Field complex

The curb ramps are non compliant for a variety of reasons.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure a minimum of 3' wide accessible route with a cross slope of 2% or less across the driveways. Install parallel corner curb ramps.

#### Gate entrance to East bleachers

The grass is worn by foot traffic and the existing walkway to the gate is blocked by vehicles. Accessible parking could be located here.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure path to gate is not blocked.
- Establish at least two accessible parking spaces, with at least one for vans.

#### Ramp from gate entrance to East bleachers

A person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in mesh when pushing open gate. The gate appears to be kept locked. There is no 5' level landing on

pull side of gate and the ramp lacks a railing.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Create 5' level landing (or reverse gate direction) and install railing.
- Make gate accessible.

#### Bleacher stairs

Stair nosings exceeding 1/2" in certain locations will cause tripping.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Ensure that nosings are less than 1/2" and smooth with the risers.

#### Ramp(s) off bleachers

The ramps have the appropriate handrail extensions at their bottoms but not at the top - likely because of the landing design.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

Contact bleacher manufacturer to see if they are aware of the problem and if they can modify the existing arrangement to conform to the ADAAG.

#### Team benches and gates to Ball field- both sides of field

Gate is less than 3' wide lacks a solid surface at bottom 18" of the push side of gate and the pad does not extend beyond the width of the gate. A person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in mesh. The concrete pad under the benches does not provide an accessible route along the benches or pull off space at the ends of the benches.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Install accessible route along benches.
- Install a 5' concrete pad on the field side of gate and extend it 18" on either side of gate.
- Make gate accessible.

#### Route from bleachers to restrooms and refreshment stand in Cousineau Field House

The 75'-100' route across grass and mud is very difficult to traverse for people with mobility and visual impairments.

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Establish an accessible route meeting ADAAG.

#### Restrooms in field house

Note the following areas of concern:

##### *Minimum Compliance*

- Sink pipes should be uniformly laid out as well as wrapped.

- Entry doors weight exceeds tolerances and do not meet ADAAG.

**Drinking fountain at field house**

The drinking fountain is not in working condition. The asphalt surface under it is not level.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair fountain.
- Level asphalt surface.

**Ramp into rear of field house**

The ramp has a vertical lip at the bottom and is a hazard.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Remove vertical lip.

**Slope to access road via double gate**

If this is a pedestrian entrance, the existing slope is too steep to be easily traversed.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Either replace existing slope with a ramp (or a 5% walkway) OR ensure an alternate accessible route is nearby.

**Sloped walkway to lot adjacent to field house**

This walkway has a slope of approximately 10.7% but could be fairly easily re-graded and made into a ramp.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Either replace existing slope with a ramp (or a 5% walkway) OR ensure an alternate accessible route is nearby.

**Refreshment stands serving window**

The window is 37" high which works for people standing however it is too high for a person seated in a wheelchair or scooter to utilize.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Either provide a lower counter OR raise the exterior grade approximately 4" so that the counter would then be no more than 34" high.

**Baseball bleachers and dugouts**

The existing conditions are completely inaccessible and noted significant deterioration of the concrete structures. For that reason, we did not conduct an extensive review.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Either redesign or provide equivalent facilitation.

**Service drive**

The existing asphalt road and adjacent sidewalks are fairly deteriorated. Because of the minimal number of vehicles, people can safely walk in the street. The existing gate and bollards can remain however the sidewalks should be completely rebuilt.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Repair or replace existing sidewalk and street surfaces.

**Parking adjacent to basketball court**

There are at least twelve parking spaces but none are accessible.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish one van accessible parking space.

**Pathway along basketball and tennis courts**

There is an informal pathway but it is not accessible.

Seating options are limited and there is a lack of bicycle parking.

***Minimum Compliance***

- All features must be connected by an accessible route.

**Gate to courts**

A person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in mesh. The gate does not open a fully because of the adjacent landscape grade and there is no connecting accessible route.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Make gate accessible.

**Gate to track from parking area**

The path is not paved and obviously puddles.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route from the parking lot to the track.

**Bleachers and gate in between track and tennis courts**

There is no accessible route connecting the courts to the track and the bleachers are not located on an accessible route.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Establish an accessible route between the facilities.
- Add a concrete pad under the bleachers and extend it 4' on all sides of the bleachers.

**Entry into play structure from track**

The sloped walkway does not provide a 5' level landing at the pull side of the gate. A person using a wheelchair will get their foot rests caught in gate mesh.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Remove gate OR make gate accessible and establish a 5' level landing.

**Play structure**

The structure is, in general, accessible; however, there is only one transfer entrance/platform.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Add a transfer entrance.

**Accessible walkway around play structure**

The Play structure, unlike others, has a wide walkway around it. The structure is fortunate to have trees around half of it to provide shade that could also shade future benches and picnic tables.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Head up trees to at least 8' so that when wet, they do not hang below 80".

**Play structure entry gate and fencing along Orchard Street**

For scooter users or parents with double strollers, the entry is awkward because of its narrowness. A person using a wheelchair will get foot rests caught in mesh.

***Minimum Compliance***

- Make gate accessible.

**Curb ramps and crosswalk at Orchard Street and Standish Road**

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish accessible curb ramps.*

**Orchard Street sidewalks**

The existing sidewalks have a variety of tripping hazards including vertical displacements, holes and patches. The sidewalks are 54" wide but do not have passing locations (5' X 5'). From a practical standpoint, the sidewalks are not wide enough for two people to walk side by side comfortably and allow someone to pass. The planting strip is not level with the sidewalk - creating a tripping or twisted ankle hazard. Where the strip is compacted dirt, pedestrians are likely crossing Orchard Street despite the absence of a crosswalk.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establishing 5' x 5' passing locations along the sidewalk at reasonable intervals not to exceed 200'.*
- *Repair sidewalks accordingly.*

**Track entrance along Orchard Street sidewalk**

This entrance is used frequently however there is no accessible route from the sidewalk to the track, despite a gentle slope. The gate is not accessible

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish an accessible route from the sidewalk to the field.*
- *Make gate accessible.*

**Track entrance at parking lot**

The existing walkway is 11%. There is no level landing at the gate entrance.

***Minimum Compliance***

- *Establish an accessible route from the sidewalk to the track.*
- *Establish an accessible route to the bench and trash can.*
- *If gate is kept, make accessible including a level landing and 18" clear space on latch side.*

**Additional Recommendations:**

1. The present maintenance/ management of this site appears to provide adequate protection against field degradation. Minor modifications to the management of field permits could reduce field practices that needlessly create centralized field wear. Coaches need to ensure that field practices rotate between various field areas rather than limiting practices to one area of the field, causing soil compaction, reduced turf density, and overall poor surface conditions. Coaches also need to be held responsible for improper uses such as practicing in the rain, causing surface conditions to quickly degrade resulting in the need for significant field repair. Management practices should include vigorous discipline by mechanisms such as barring future field use permits and fines for field repairs

for teams that needlessly degrade the fields.

2. Parking vehicles over the curbs in certain locations, such as down Marion Road towards the tennis courts, is generating isolated conditions of poor turf; minor repairs of the asphalt curbing would help prevent this situation.
3. Resurface track
4. Install shade trees
5. Install benches
6. Add new lighting
7. Install new irrigation system
8. Install signs to alert users of game and event schedules
9. Color seal the Mary Williams Shea tennis courts
10. Color seal the basketball court
11. Resurface baseball and football fields
12. Install new drainage system to the football and baseball fields
13. New wall in left field needs padding
14. Replace football and baseball field lights
15. Park needs storage building with weight room
16. Put up signs to alert of games and events
17. Pave area from beginning of track straight to Marion Road
18. Consider synthetic grass on football/baseball field/soccer/lacrosse

## WATERTOWN SQUARE - COLUMBUS DELTA

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<b>Address:</b>	Watertown Square
<b>Owner:</b>	DPW
<b>Managed By:</b>	None
<b>Public Grants:</b>	None
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	Accessing delta is an issue; once on the parcel, it is accessible
<b>Zoning:</b>	Central Business
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning

**Description:** Passive recreation area.

**Conditions and Key Issues:** Well maintained landscaping.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Examine methods of providing safer access.

## WHITNEY HILL PARK

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<b>Address:</b>	Northwest of Marion Rd and Marshall Street
<b>Owner:</b>	Town
<b>Managed By:</b>	DPW
<b>Public Grants:</b>	
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	
<b>Zoning:</b>	OSC
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Chapter 97

### **Description:**

This wooded site abuts the Victory Field complex, the Department of Public Works (DPW) facility, and a residential community to the south and east. Two identifiable unpaved paths traverse this hillside park. The site is the only naturally wooded site of this size in the Town.

### **Conditions and Key Issues:**

Since the site has no maintained paths it does not require extensive DPW attention, however trash pickup and occasional tree maintenance is required. There is evidence of illegal dumping at the western edge of the site by Marlboro Terrace.

### **Recommendations:**

1. This site offers a passive recreational setting for birdwatchers and those out for a brief stroll, but the size and isolation of the site makes extensive use for additional activities unlikely. Maintenance practices should be adjusted to provide adequate monitoring of illegal dumping, particularly at the path entrance along Marlboro Terrace.

2. Presently, the Conservation Commission is seeking to have the protection status of the site change from Ch. 97 to Ch. 40, which would put the parcel under the control of the Conservation Commission. A management plan for the site could allow for removing some non-native plants, adding more native species and establishing understory growth, perhaps in partnership with the New England Wildflower Society

## D. STATE AND FEDERALLY OWNED OPEN SPACE PARCELS

### THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (GSA) SITE \_\_\_\_\_ (Former Arsenal storage) at Greenough Boulevard and Arsenal Street



<b>Address:</b>	Greenough Boulevard and Arsenal Street
<b>Owner:</b>	General Services Administration
<b>Managed By:</b>	
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	None
<b>Public Grants:</b>	
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	N/A
<b>Zoning:</b>	Industrial
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Activity & Use limitations, Wetlands

#### Description:

This wedge shaped parcel is approximately 12 acres and is located near the intersection of Arsenal Street and Greenough Boulevard. The site was formerly part of the Watertown Arsenal and was used for the storage of various materials including radiological waste. On a recent site visit, landscaping and construction debris was observed at the outside gate. Extensive cleanup activities of hazardous waste and radiological waste have taken place at the site.

#### Conditions and Key Issues:

A perennial stream runs through the site from Sawins Pond. The DCR Master Plan calls for a skating rink at this site but the hydrology would probably prohibit this use. Environmental cleanup is nearly complete and the property will be turned over to DCR soon. There will be Activity and Use Limitations written into the deed and Wetlands regulations will also restrict development on the site. The site contains three buildings that are dilapidated and possibly dangerous. A chain link fence surrounds the site. DCR plans to narrow Greenough Boulevard and widen the park land along the Charles River.

#### Recommendations:

The Open Space Committee recommends that the GSA be required to raze the unsafe buildings before the land reverts to the Commonwealth, and that DCR seek funding to restore the area to a wetland/recreation use once the wetland status of the site is established.



Figure 15 - General Services Administration Site

## CHARLES RIVER RESERVATION



<b>Address:</b>	Southern Watertown Boundary
<b>Owner:</b>	Department of Conservation and Recreation
<b>Managed By:</b>	Department of Conservation and Recreation
<b>Public Accessibility:</b>	Unlimited
<b>A.D.A. Accessibility:</b>	
<b>Zoning:</b>	Open Space Conservancy
<b>Level of Protection:</b>	Zoning, wetlands protection (Conservation Commission)

### Description:

The DCR properties along the Charles River total approximately 53 acres. The recently opened “river walk” west of Watertown Square, constructed by DCR, involved reclaiming land illegally taken by 92 abutters, mostly for parking. This project was made possible by federal funds, as well as private donations, such as the land gift of 2.5 acres from the Stop & Shop Companies. The Charles River Reservation consists of a continuous land buffer on both sides of the Charles River that extends from Waltham to Boston. Within the reservation, the open space varies from active playgrounds and picnic areas to passive conservation areas with limited access.

### Conditions and Key Issues:

Currently the reservation has paved walkways extending from the boundary with Cambridge to Watertown Square. The condition of much of this walkway is poor due to a lack of consistent

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

maintenance efforts. Similarly, the conditions of the active recreation areas are not well maintained. Due to financial pressures at DCR, town efforts to advocate improved maintenance have met with limited success. The fish ladder at the Watertown dam is not functioning well. A new effort by the Charles River Conservancy to engage volunteer help with river maintenance appears promising.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Explore improvements to the Watertown dam and fish ladder that will benefit wildlife and/or improve aesthetics
2. Clarify human versus natural habitat
3. Improve landing and its landscaping
4. Explore volunteer sources of labor
5. Geese Peace to control Canada Goose population
6. Improve path between Watertown Square and North Beacon Street
7. Improve all pavement, add bike racks and move benches



Figure 16 - Charles River

## SECTION 6 - COMMUNITY GOALS

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### A. DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

Community goals were ascertained via public working meetings and a public hearing conducted by the Open Space Committee and the Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey conducted in January 2005. Surveys were sent to over 12,000 head of households as listed in the town's database. Questions were chosen to determine residents' perceptions, priorities, and desires with regard to open space and recreational resources. Approximately 3,000 (25%) surveys were returned, with the following results. All surveys were anonymous.

#### Survey Questions:

#### Town of Watertown Open Space & Recreation Plan Survey

Watertown is updating its state-mandated Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Open Space Committee needs your opinion! Your response is anonymous. This information will help us to formulate goals and set the future direction for open space and recreation planning. Once a draft Plan is formulated, we will hold public hearings to comment before the Plan is finalized. Thank you for your participation!

*Please return the form by \*\*\*\*\* to Watertown Planning Department, 149 Main Street, Watertown, MA 02472.*

1. *How do you and your family use the open space and parks in Watertown?*
2. *What improvement/changes would you recommend?*
3. *Would you or family members make use of the proposed multi-use "bike path" which would connect to the Minuteman Path at Alewife T stop in Cambridge and continue through East Watertown to the Charles River at the Arsenal Park area? \_\_\_ Would you or family members use an off-road multi-use "bike path" to run roughly from the Middle School to the new Center for the Arts on Arsenal Street? \_\_\_ What concerns or suggestions for improvement do you have regarding bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the town? Please mention specific areas in the town.*
4. *The Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA) allows communities to raise funds for open space and recreation; (also: historic preservation and affordable housing), by levying a 1-3% "surcharge" on property taxes. The funds raised in this way are eligible to receive matching funds from the State. Elderly citizens and veterans are exempted from the surcharge, and the community can decide to also exempt the first 100,000 of assessed property valuation and/or qualified low and moderate income owner-occupants. In Watertown, the average tax bill is currently \$4,244. Participation in the CPA would generate revenue as follows:*

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	1%	2%	3%
<b>Surcharge with \$100,000 Exemption on the average tax bill</b>	\$32.09	\$64.18	\$96.27
<b>Revenue Generated</b>	\$290,000	\$580,000	\$870,000

*Would you like to see the Community Preservation Act put to Watertown voters?\_\_\_ What percent surcharge would you recommend be on the ballot?\_\_\_ Would you be likely to vote in favor of the Act?\_\_\_*

*5. Do you like the idea of closing “Little Greenough” Boulevard to motorized vehicles, restricting access to a small parking area at each end, reserving through passage for bicycles and pedestrians? Why or why not.*

*6. Do you have other ideas or suggestions for enhancing the open space and recreation experience in Watertown?*

### **Survey Conclusions:**

The Survey was summarized by an independent group of community volunteers with the assistance of Town staff. Special thanks go to these many volunteers who devoted a large amount of time collecting the data from 3000 completed surveys, especially:

- Deborah Peterson who tabulated the data, and
- Carolyn Bays who wrote the narrative summary of the results.

The summary is included on the following three pages.

*Resident Carolyn Bays looked over the open-ended answers for 1000 completed surveys and summarized them as follows:*

### Results of Open Space Survey

The results of the open space survey are in, and a preliminary look at them has been completed. In general people were very positive towards the town's open space areas. They love the work that has been done recently and identified some particular areas that they appreciate including the new playgrounds and river walk. As one resident said "You are commended for the marvelous playgrounds for children, thank you very much". Of the new river walk west of Watertown Square, one person wrote "the river walk (is) very beautiful" and another wrote that they "simply love the new river walk". Another resident summed up many of the positive comments saying simply "Watertown is a very beautiful, peaceful town".

Although they love what has been done with the new river walk, people want even more. The new proposed bike paths seemed to be supported overwhelmingly – even by non-bikers. As one biker put it "MORE BIKE PATHS! We love them". Non-bikers said they support anything to keep bikes off the roads. Many residents were interested in connecting bike paths to other bike paths in the area. They suggested every connection to other routes imaginable. The most asked for connection (besides the proposed routes) was a connection west to Waltham. The chief complaint about the bike paths was that the river path east of the square being unkempt and very bumpy.

Bike lanes in the street were also mentioned. The support for this was more divided. In fact, judging from this survey there is a lot of frustration between bicyclists and drivers. Comments by motorists ranged from "make it clear to cyclists that they must obey traffic rules" to "bicycles pose a significant risk to all of us". Several people even angrily proposed a ban on bicycles on all public streets. Bicyclists responses ranged from "I don't use my bike as much as I'd like due to fear of getting hit by a car" to the comment about motorists who should be educated that "cyclists have the right of way on all roads". A few people asked that bicycles be registered and many said that bicyclists should be required to have lights when riding at night. Bicyclists asked that drivers not drive on the bicycle lanes and that wider bicycle lanes be painted on roads that have the room (Belmont Street was often cited). The one thing that everyone agreed on is that both bicyclists and motorists need to be better educated on the rules of the road.

Walkers also wanted bicyclists to be educated on the etiquette of bike paths. Use of the bike paths for pedestrians is common and walkers complained that bicyclists were a danger to pedestrians on the narrow paths. Several people felt that the paths should not allow both bikes and pedestrians. A more commonly suggested solution was to widen existing paths and to divide them into walking/biking sides. Other more minor concerns for the walkers on these paths were the poison ivy on the river path and the goose problem. They requested the grass be mowed more regularly as well as the paths plowed in the winter.

Bike paths are not the only place people walk in Watertown. People said they enjoy walking through the parks and on Whitney Hill as well as around town. They listed several concerns. But the chief among them was safety. They are not only concerned about bicycles whizzing by them but also impassable sidewalks and loiterers on unlit dark walking paths as well as dangerous street crossings.

Sidewalks were a big problem for people. People wanted cars that were parked on sidewalks to be ticketed. They wanted sidewalks maintained better and many people were frustrated by the lack of snow removal on sidewalks this winter. As one put it the lack of snow removal is “very dangerous.... Children have to walk in the road at night”. Several people felt property owners should be required to clear sidewalks at least along major roads where safety is a serious concern.

Many people asked for lights along the bike paths at night. One of the main reasons for this is safety. Apparently there is a lot of drug use and other illegal activity down near the river paths. There were many requests for increased police patrols down near the river.

Walkers are also scared of being hit by cars. Watertown Square topped the list as the least pedestrian friendly intersection in Watertown. People asked for everything from a walk only cycle in the lights to a pedestrian overpass at the square. Many other intersections were listed as problems such as Common/Orchard/Church, Arlington/Grove, and Greenough Boulevard/Arsenal St. They asked for better, more clearly marked crosswalks. One person mentioned that the barrels really helped to remind cars to give pedestrians the right of way in crosswalks.

The congestion in Watertown and the needs of all has caused friction. As one resident put it we “need to balance between pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular use of the roads”. Many residents advocated traffic calming strategies and one suggested a committee be formed for this purpose.

The answer to the question of closing Greenough was not easily discerned because of the way the question was asked. What is certain is that more people are against a total closing than for it. Arguments against were that it would increase travel on already congested roads, that it might increase the presences of loiterers without the constant presence of cars and that there are already bike paths along that road. The main reasons for supporting the closing were that we need more open space, it would help make us more of a community, and it would improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists using the road.

However, many of the people who were against a complete closing of the road supported weekend or Sunday only closings. Many people felt that the issues against closing it would be addressed if it were closed only on the weekends during nice weather. Because it was not listed as an option on the survey it is hard to know how most people would support a weekends only closing, but, judging from the number of people who said “no, unless weekends only”, it appears that it might be an option.

The tax surcharge issue on the other hand was clearly supported and the majority of people sounded positive. There were many people who said they simply couldn't afford it, but the majority supported it and said they would happily support the continued efforts at expanding and improving our open space. The increasing population density frustrates residents and the new construction has upset many. As one resident put it “stop putting condos on every empty spot in Watertown”. They are so enthusiastic about supporting our open space (and are begging for more of it) that they are even willing to pay for it!

Besides the specific questions asked on the survey, there were lots of suggestions about general open space needs. Residents wanted more litter removal and trash pick up, more benches, more bathrooms and drinking fountains in the parks, as well as more of the foam-floored playgrounds. They asked for more bike racks, more benches, more picnic tables, and more than anything else, more trees. As one resident put it “trees and more trees, we perish without trees”. They asked for trees to shade the playgrounds, trees to line the

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residential streets, trees in the center, trees in the parks and even trees along the river path (“to hide the ugly car dealership”).

There were also many suggestions about open space uses. Ideas included issuing permits to grill along the waterfront and an easy put in place in the river for canoes and kayaks, as well as a canoe/kayak rental facility. They suggested installing a volleyball net, vending machines or food stands in parks like Victory Field, an outdoor ice rink, chess tables in the park, young person’s basketball court, tennis/racquetball backboard and an indoor playground for children. They asked for educational signs to be installed in our open spaces, ranging from historical markers to wildlife information to basic rules of etiquette.

People would love a better community swimming pool and asked if it would be possible for Watertown to take over the MDC pool. They also asked for a place to go sledding and cross country skiing now that Oakley won’t allow it. They suggested the town turn Whitney into a sledding hill or that they negotiate some sort of agreement with the Country Club (like net leasing the property) so residents can continue using the area.

There were also many community-oriented suggestions. Many people requested a community garden be organized. People love the concert series (“they are great!”) and requested more community organized events like those. Several people requested summertime movies in the park. Numerous dog owners and non-dog owners alike requested a community dog park. One person asked for adult sports league and offered to help organize it. Another suggested a mural painting by students. The most ambitious suggestion was a firelights program like the one in Providence.

The fact that many of the responses were suggestions for improvement instead of complaints is a testament to the hard work and good job the town has been doing. In fact the residents are begging the town to take over jobs like the pool because they trust our town to do a better job. Overall, people seem to be satisfied with the work the town does in regards to open space. As many residents said, “Keep up the super work”, “I think you have done a fine job”. Residents were also very happy to have been asked for their feedback so, to conclude with a final quote from one resident “thank you for considering these suggestions”.

## B. STATEMENT OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS

Watertown's open space resources are being eroded by the pressures of incremental development. The Town has limited public open and recreational space under its stewardship that must be protected and preserved for future generations. Opportunities for the Town to acquire additional open space should be pursued. The fiscal realities of the Town may preclude the possibility of large scale public acquisition of additional open space resources. The Task Force has developed the following goals to maximize the available resources to their fullest potential while also attempting to stem further loss of additional open space through more restrictive policies regarding privately owned properties. The updated goals are as follows:

1. Improve the Amount, Accessibility, and Condition of Watertown's Recreational Resources
2. Beautify, Protect, and Increase Publicly Owned Conservation, Passive, and Active Open Space
3. Preserve Open Space on Private Parcels
4. Take Better Advantage of Watertown's Proximity to the Charles River
5. Aggressively Seek New Funding Sources
6. Make Watertown More Friendly to Pedestrians and Bicyclists
7. Improve the Urban Forest
8. Improve Education
9. Improve Safety

Given the stated goals and objectives of this plan to "improve the amount, accessibility and conditions of Watertown's recreational resources", the Task Force has developed the following ranked inventory of parcels that should be incorporated into the Town's open space and recreation system (see "Five Year Action Plan/Acquisition Map"). Strategies and coordination within various Town commissions, departments, and boards will be needed to facilitate the acquisition of these parcels.

### Ranked Future Acquisition Inventory

1. Railroad right-of-way from the Cambridge border to Watertown Square.
2. Any purchase of land that would facilitate a bike path west of Watertown Square.
3. Sawin's Pond to Williams Pond Greenway.
4. Walkers Pond and adjacent open space (near former Raytheon site at the western border with Waltham).
5. Any parcels that become available along Grove Street to expand Filippello Park.
6. Pocket parks wherever possible.
7. Gore Estate from Main Street to Waltham Street bordered on the west by a brook and the east by the rear of homes on Edward Road.

## SECTION 7 - ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

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### A. SUMMARY OF RESOURCE PROTECTION NEEDS

#### **Urban Forest:**

Watertown needs to adopt policies that will improve the health and quantity of town-owned trees. A first step should be an inventory, listing the species, size, age, health, and location of each tree. The beginning of such a process is being considered by the Tree Warden via the town's tree study proposal. Completing this study will require a significant commitment of time and funding and will require ongoing updating.

#### **Wetlands Protection:**

Watertown's Conservation Commission is responsible for the protection of wetlands under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (G.L. C.131,s.40), but the town lacks precise information about its wetlands and vernal pools. Under the Town's current zoning bylaws, development within 150' of a wetland is restricted from various uses or development. But proper delineation, mapping, and documentation of the Town's wetlands, floodplains and vernal pools is a critical need for protecting these resources.

#### **Ponds:**

There are several ponds that are uncared for and polluted, with the exception of those located on the grounds of Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Those ponds, such as Sawins, Williams and Walker ponds are so obscured by vegetation that they are largely "out of sight and out of mind". This needs to be rectified through proper clean up and oversight, although this may be difficult to achieve due to private ownership.

#### **Charles River:**

The river and its walkways are a tremendous asset to the town that requires ongoing stewardship. The town needs to continue to foster its relationship with DCR to ensure that the conditions of the Charles River and its environs continue to improve. Discharging untreated waste into the municipal storm sewers is illegal however sampling performed for the EPA various sewer outfalls into the Charles River has shown at times that some waste has flowed into the river. Watertown needs to monitor outfalls under various conditions to identify sources of contamination, treat the illegal and/or malfunctioning sewer hookups aggressively, and perform ongoing testing to address any new problems swiftly.

#### **Land Resources:**

The Town's Zoning Ordinance is currently being revised. The last time the Zoning Ordinance was updated was in 1989, resulting in changes that included creating the Cluster Residential zone designed to permit dense development of a parcel while preserving the remainder as open space. Additionally, the lot size for new or intensified development in the two-family zone was increased for new lots established after May 29, 1996. Today, there is significant concern within the community regarding the intensification of development on residential lots. Increasingly, single family structures are being torn down and replaced by multiple unit structures, with resulting

changes to neighborhood character. While the proposed zoning changes would provide protection from additional development on undersized lots, the Town needs to be more proactive in planning if open space is to be preserved. The town undertook an analysis to describe the amount of development that could occur under current zoning, often referred to as a “build-out analysis”, in 2001. The current Zoning review process will identify methods of regulating growth and the massing of dwellings on lots, while maintaining the appropriate balance of property rights.

### **Parks and Playgrounds:**

Watertown’s parks and playgrounds have received many recent updates and it is important to continue to maintain and improve these facilities. Disabled access needs to be provided to the extent possible. Many of the play areas are not permanently protected, and therefore could potentially be lost to development in the future.

## B. SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY NEEDS

Given Watertown’s relatively small size and its dense population, there is always going to be the need to preserve and maintain existing open space and to expand open space opportunities to the extent possible. Opportunities such as improved access and visual connection to the Charles River will enhance an underutilized community resource. The need for open space also drives an interest in converting unused/underutilized sites like the GSA to open space. The survey captured several comments from residents including:

1. Acquire strategically located open space
2. Start a fund to buy up land for more open space;
3. Educate children about open space and the environment
4. More coverage in the Watertown Tab of all river/open space/conservation issues
5. Clean up Sawin Pond area, negotiate conservation easement, tie into GSA property
6. Maintain parks and open space
7. Lack of awareness of the existing open space in Town of Watertown
8. Need more police patrols in bike path, open space, river, parks areas
9. Improvements to river
10. Add more trees

Walking is reported as the most frequent recreation activity in the Metropolitan Boston Region (source: Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan). The Town’s Open Space survey revealed that the most frequent recreational activity is also walking, at 34% of respondents.

Bicyclists have expressed the need more bike racks around town and a zoning enforcement mechanism for ensuring that bike racks are installed in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. There continues to be debate around the need for more bike lanes versus less bike lanes and more and wider multi-use paths.

The Town of Watertown has a significant number of elderly and handicapped residents and visitors who depend on open space and recreation facilities as much as or more than others.

Though the recent technological advances in mobility and sports equipment provides significant opportunities for handicapped and elderly to enjoy outdoor recreation and activities, one of the most critical needs for many are simply finding access to open space. Many of the open spaces in Watertown and other older communities are antiquated in providing barrier-free access from parking and sidewalks to recreational facilities. Special provisions for the handicapped and elderly should be provided whenever a playground or other recreational facility is scheduled for renovation, and is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). During the open space planning process the Town contracted with Adaptive Environments to undertake an assessment of Town recreational properties to determine compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board ( See “Watertown Open Space and Recreational Areas: Review for accessibility and human centered design characteristics”). The majority of issues centered on the need to upgrade and maintain elements to meet ADA requirements. More substantive issues that surfaced were ones of accessible route and/or entrances; items like appropriate curb ramps at intersections and entrances, and correcting excessive slopes on sidewalks and pathways. The study also noted opportunities to improve conditions that go beyond minimum compliance with state and federal regulations, and incorporate more comprehensive understanding of all of the users within the Town’s pedestrian and open space system.

### C. MANAGEMENT NEEDS

A GIS base map of the Town’s open space resources can, when fully integrated with all of the Town’s departments and, properly maintained, greatly assist in the accurate monitoring and management of resources. Trends describing net gain/loss of various types of open space can quickly be accessed. The proposed GIS tree inventory is an exceptional application which when completed could provide various Town departments/commissions with vital analytical capabilities in the Town’s endeavor to stem the decline of Watertown’s urban forests. Meaningful analyses will require periodic updates as well as additional data and mapping. A well-maintained GIS system will help realize many of this plan’s stated goals and also provide a systematic method for comparing subsequent Open Space and Recreation Plan updates and modifications.

Improve communication with DCR regarding Charles River and environs management.

Improve funding to the DPW and Recreation Department to permit improved maintenance to fields, facilities and equipment at the parks

## SECTION 8 - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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The goals and objectives of this plan provide the framework for a five-year action plan for open space and recreational projects. As stated in Section 2, the primary purpose of this plan is to provide a consistent policy directive for Town agencies to reference to ensure that Watertown's open space and recreational resources are not lost due to the pressures of development or to uncoordinated individual actions that lose sight of the cumulative effects that these actions may have on the entire open space and recreational system.

The goals and objectives were derived via the Open Space and Recreational Plan Survey and the input of the Task Force members after reviewing the 1996 Plan and current needs.

### GOALS

1. Improve the Amount, Accessibility, and Condition of Watertown's Recreational Resources
2. Beautify, protect, and increase the amount of publicly owned conservation and passive open space.
3. Preserve open space on private parcels.
4. Take better advantage of Watertown's proximity to the Charles River.
5. Aggressively Seek New Funding Sources.
6. Make Watertown friendlier to pedestrians and bicyclists
7. Improve the urban forest
8. Improve Education
9. Improve Safety in Open Space and Recreational Areas

### OBJECTIVES

- Goal 1. Improve the Amount, Accessibility, and Condition of Watertown's Recreational Resources

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1. Acquire open space, particularly spaces that would enhance and leverage existing resources in under-represented sections of the Town.
2. Support the State EOTC and DCR to develop a multi-use path link between Fresh Pond (Minuteman Path) and the Charles River near Watertown Square.
3. Continue to make improvements to the parks and fields.
4. Increase recreational space at the Charles River.
5. Provide more swimming options.

### Goal 2. **Beautify, protect, and increase the amount of publicly owned conservation and passive open space.**

#### Objectives

1. Acquire public open space.
2. Make Walkers Pond accessible to the public and expand open space in the vicinity of Walkers Pond.
3. Discourage development, other than recreation, of publicly owned open space.
4. Restore wetlands and passive recreation on the General Services Administration's parcel located at the intersection of Greenough Boulevard and Arsenal Street (formerly part of the U.S. Army Arsenal).
5. Develop pocket parks.
6. Explore locations for community gardens.
7. Design and develop former incinerator site to be compatible with Filippello Park.
8. Increase open space at Filippello Park.
9. Develop a landscaped traffic island adoption program by private businesses.
10. Pursue acquisition and/or public access to Sawin's and Williams Ponds.

### Goal 3. **Preserve open space on private parcels.**

#### Objectives

1. Amend zoning ordinances to require increased open space for new residential, commercial, and industrial construction and modifications to existing structures/lots.
2. Maintain plantings in parking areas.
3. Encourage beautification of sidewalk planting strips.

### Goal 4. **Take better advantage of Watertown's proximity to the Charles River.**

#### Objectives

1. Acquire strategic parcels that will assist in linking Watertown's recreational/open space system to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) facilities along the Charles River.
2. Encourage the DCR to improve the maintenance of its properties along the Charles River especially east of Watertown Square.

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3. Enlarge the riverbank area on Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal Street and Memorial Drive.
4. Increase water-based activities at the Charles River.
5. Improve safety for pedestrians wishing to access the river path in all areas, with special attention to the crossings at Watertown Square.
6. Make Watertown Yacht Club area more accessible to the public.
7. Encourage DCR to extend Charles River Path to Waltham.

### Goal 5. Aggressively Seek New Funding Sources.

#### Objectives

1. Increase ability to acquire, preserve and rehabilitate open space and recreational facilities.

### Goal 6. Make Watertown friendlier to pedestrians and bicyclists

#### Objectives

1. Develop a multi-use path from School Street to connect with the Charles River in West Watertown.
2. Make sidewalks passable for pedestrians in winter.
3. Evaluate ways to improve difficult street crossings.
4. Improve sidewalks throughout the Town.
5. Improve crossing safety at Watertown Square.
6. Do not allow parking on sidewalks.
7. Promote fitness and encourage walking.

### Goal 7. Improve the urban forest

#### Objectives

1. Increase tree planting on public property.
2. Minimize harm to trees from road salt.
3. Minimize removal of large caliper trees.
4. Build sidewalks and curbs in a manner to facilitate tree plantings.
5. Increase the number of trees on private property.
6. Encourage native fauna.
7. Create shaded areas.
8. Ensure landscape plans for public space are appropriate to the setting.

### Goal 8. Improve Education

#### Objectives

1. Improve Charles River path signage.
2. Disseminate information about open space on the Town website.
3. Make information about Superfund cleanup activities more easily available to

the public.

4. Improve education for dog owners on proper waste disposal techniques.
5. Prepare an annual report on progress toward the goals and objectives of this plan and include it in the town's Annual Report.
6. Provide improved education and signage for bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists.

**Goal 9. Improve Safety in Open Space and Recreational Areas**

**Objectives**

1. Make emergency services accessible to users of open space.
2. Make parks safe at night.
3. Make safe Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal and North Beacon Streets.
4. Reduce harmful effects of pesticide use.

## SECTION 9- FIVE- YEAR ACTION PLAN

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The purpose of this section is to establish an action plan addressing Watertown's open space and recreational needs within the context of the Town's stated goals and objectives. The Action Plan is arranged sequentially beginning with the first goal and the associated objectives to facilitate the achievement of this goal. The plan can be read as follows under "Actions": 1-1-1 references the first action that addresses the first objective of the first goal; 1-1-2 references the second action that addresses the first objective of the first goal and so on. The final column provides the timetable that the proposed action is to take place (see "Five Year Action Plan/ Acquisition Map").

Many of the objectives in the 5-year action plan respond to the issue of acquiring additional open space and establishing more recreational opportunities in Watertown. Some of the smaller actions can be accomplished through the Town's general fund, but many of the others will require additional assistance. There are many opportunities at the state and federal level for obtaining technical and funding assistance for parks and open space in urban locations such as Watertown. Watertown has considered several opportunities in order to access assistance for conservation, open space, and recreation purposes, and will continue to investigate sources as they become available:

Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity (LAND) grant program - This program provides funds to municipal conservation commissions for the purchase of conservation land. Several sensitive parcels in the Town have been reviewed as potential candidates for this grant program.

Parkland Acquisition and Renovation for Communities (PARC) grant program - The PARC program assists communities with the acquisition of parkland, as well as construction of new parks and renovation of existing parks. With the completion of the ADA survey conducted on the Town's major parks and recreation areas, the potential for applying this type of grant to the improvement and provision of handicap access is clear. Many of the parks in Town could be vastly improved for use by the whole population by providing these types of improvements.

Community Preservation Act - The Community Preservation Act provides new funding sources which can be used to address three core community concerns: Acquisition and preservation of open space; Creation and support of affordable housing; and Acquisition and preservation of historic buildings and landscapes. The act creates a significant state matching fund, which serves as an incentive to communities to pass the CPA. The CPA must be adopted by the Town by ballot to adopt the Act. This funding could potentially be used for open space acquisition in parts of the Town which need more recreation and open space resources. Watertown placed the CPA on the ballot as a 2% real estate tax levy in 2005 and it was defeated and has not been on the ballot since.

National Park Service/ Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program - The program offers technical assistance only to nonprofit organizations, community groups, and local or state government agencies. The program's technical staff offers assistance for recreation and conservation projects in building partnerships, assess resources, develop concept plans, engage public participation, identify potential sources of funding, create public outreach, organizational development, and provide conservation and recreation information. Watertown had planned for

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and applied for this grant in 2008 to obtain assistance in planning the Watertown Community Path through Watertown Square.

Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)/ Recreational Trails grant program - The Recreational Trails Program provides funding support for a variety of trail protection, construction and stewardship projects throughout Massachusetts. This national program makes funds available to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Watertown has submitted grant applications for this program in the past and considers it a good match for implementing many portions of the Watertown Community Path.

### GOAL 1: IMPROVE THE AMOUNT, ACCESSIBILITY, AND CONDITION OF WATERTOWN'S RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
1-1 Support the State EOTC and DCR to develop a multi-use path link between Fresh Pond (Minuteman Path) and the Charles River near Watertown Square.	1-1-1 Initiate a preliminary study to determine the costs and specifications for the bike path.  1-1-2 Support the State acquisition of the R.R. property from MBTA Alewife Terminal to Grove Street, known as the Watertown Branch.  1-1-3 Explore and pursue public and private funding sources for the bike path (i.e., SAFETEA-LU, municipal bond).	Underway - design on segment from School Street to Grove Street, funded by DCR  2007 Planning  2007 Planning
1-2 Continue to make improvements to the parks and fields.	1-2-1 Make necessary improvements to the skateboard park at Arsenal Park.  1-2-2 Install exercise stations at some locations.  1-2-3 Provide more trash barrels in all open spaces and insure frequent trash collection.  1-2-4 Add and repair irrigation systems to the Town's playing fields.  1-2-5 Upgrade the Town's tot lots to meet new safety and disability standards.	2007 Recreation  2008 Recreation  2006 DPW

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Objective	Actions	Year/Department
	<p>1-2-6 Follow maintenance plan for parks</p> <p>1-2-7 Establish a comprehensive interdepartmental plan for all users, routine cleaning, and maintenance of all town owned recreation and open space.</p>	<p>2007 Recreation</p> <p>2006 Recreation</p> <p>Ongoing DPW/Recreation</p> <p>2006 DPW/Recreation</p>
1-3 Increase recreational space at the Charles River	1-3-1 Try a pilot program of closing Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal and North Beacon Streets on Sundays from April through November for the use of cyclists, walkers and in-line skaters.	2007 DCR
1-4 Provide more swimming options	1-4-1 Encourage DCR to fund a longer season and longer hours at the Dealtry Pool.	2006 Planning

## GOAL 2: BEAUTIFY, PROTECT, AND INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF PUBLICLY OWNED CONSERVATION AND PASSIVE OPEN SPACE

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
2-1 Increase open space.	<p>2-1-1 Establish a program to actively pursue the acquisition of open space for preservation purposes</p> <p>2-1-2 1) develop and formalize a policy to ensure that properties that the Town acquires through tax default are considered for open space before resale or re-development. 2) develop and advertise a conservation restriction easement program.</p> <p>2-1-3 Encourage the State to purchase R.R. land from Grove Street to Alewife MBTA terminal in Cambridge.</p>	<p>2006 Planning</p> <p>2006 Town Manager, Assessor's Department, Community Development and Planning, Conservation Commission, and Zoning Department</p>
2-2 Make Walkers Pond accessible to	2-2-1 Planning Department should	2006 Planning Dept.

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Objective	Actions	Year/Department
the public and expand open space in the vicinity of Walkers Pond.	work with the landowner and lease holders to explore mechanisms to achieve this goal.	
2-3 Discourage development, other than recreation, of publicly owned open space.	<p>2-3-1 Formalize town policy through D.P.W. to allow the paving of additional Town- owned open space only where there is a demonstrated circumstance that necessitates the paving of these areas (e.g., emergency/maintenance access).</p> <p>2-3-2 Verify that all public open areas are legally protected to the maximum extent possible.</p>	<p>2006 DPW</p> <p>2006 Conservation</p>
2-4 Develop an appropriate use on the General Services Administration's parcel located at the intersection of Greenough Boulevard and Arsenal Street (formerly part of the U.S. Army Arsenal).	<p>2-4-1 Assess forthcoming wetlands delineation data and work with DCR to develop to its highest and best use.</p> <p>2-4-2 Seek funding and a legal mechanism for tearing down the buildings. Work with businesses and community groups.</p>	<p>2006 Planning</p> <p>2006 Planning, Restoration Advisory Board, Building Inspector</p>
2-5 Develop pocket parks.	<p>2-5-1 Establish a "pocket park" program to encourage public/private open space in neighborhoods.</p> <p>2-5-2 Preserve land for pocket parks.</p>	<p>2007 Planning</p> <p>2006 Planning</p>
2-6 Explore locations for community gardens.	2-6-1 As future parks are developed, consider this use.	Ongoing
2-7 Design and develop former incinerator site to be compatible with Filippello Park.	2-7-1 Develop to best serve needs of the Town. If practical, coordinate landscaping with owners of property in the area. Give consideration to both active and passive recreation.	2006 Planning
2-8 Increase open space at Filippello Park.	2-8-1 Consider purchasing properties along Grove Street as they become available for sale.	Ongoing
2-9 Improve appearance of traffic islands and strips.	2-9-1 Develop a landscaped traffic island adoption program by private businesses and civic organizations.	2006 DPW
2-10 Pursue acquisition and/or public access to Sawins and Williams	2-10 Enter into discussions with private owner.	2007 Planning/Town Council

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
Ponds.		

### GOAL 3: PRESERVE OPEN SPACE ON PRIVATE PARCELS

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
3-1 Amend zoning ordinances to require increased open space for new residential, commercial, and industrial construction and modifications to existing structures/lots.	3-1-1 Request that the Planning Board and Town Council modify the current zoning ordinance to require additional open space for new construction, and modifications to existing structures.	Ongoing Planning
3-2 Maintain plantings in parking areas.	3-2-1 Monitor plant maintenance.	Ongoing

### GOAL 4: TAKE BETTER ADVANTAGE OF WATERTOWN'S PROXIMITY TO THE CHARLES RIVER

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
4-1 Link Watertown's recreational/open space system to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) facilities along the Charles River.	4-1-1 Explore ways of connecting Watertown's recreational/open space system to the Charles River. Access to DCR river path by link through Arsenal Park to the State path on R.R. right of way.	2007 Planning and Recreation to work with DCR
	4-1-2 Target property acquisition for parcels that could provide linear open space corridors to and from the river into the Town's neighborhoods.	2007 Planning
4-2 Encourage DCR to improve the maintenance of its properties along the Charles River especially east of Watertown Square.	4-2-1 Communicate via a letter or a meeting with DCR.	2006 Conservation Commission
4-3 Enlarge the riverbank area on Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal Street and Memorial Drive.	4-3-1 Re-route Greenough Boulevard away from the Charles River.	2006
	4-3-2 Obtain state funding for feasibility study.	2006

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
4-4 Increase water-based activities at the Charles River	4-4-1 Increase canoe and kayak access and add amenities such as rental facilities and storage.	2008 DCR
4-5 Improve safety for pedestrians wishing to access the river path in all areas, with special attention to the crossings at Watertown Square.	4-5-1 Seek traffic consultant to conduct analysis.	2006 Town Council/DPW
4-6 Make Watertown Yacht Club area more accessible to the public.	4-6-1 Work with Watertown Yacht Club and DCR.	2006 DCR
4-7 Encourage DCR to extend Charles River Path to Waltham.	4-7-1 Work with DCR.	2007 DCR

### GOAL 5: AGGRESSIVELY SEEK NEW FUNDING SOURCES

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
5-1 1. Increase ability to acquire, preserve and rehabilitate open space and recreational facilities.	5-1-1 Plan for and fund improvements to existing town-owned passive and active recreational space	
	5-2-1 Pursue new funding sources: Community Preservation Act	2005
	5-3-1 Pursue new funding sources: Watertown Community Foundation	Ongoing
	5-4-1 Pursue new funding sources: Public/private partnerships	Ongoing

### GOAL 6: MAKE WATERTOWN MORE FRIENDLY TO PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
6-1 Develop a multi-use path from School Street to connect with the Charles River in West Watertown.	6-1-1 Fund a feasibility study	2007 Planning/DPW
6-2 Make sidewalks passable for pedestrians in winter.	6-2-1 Explore mechanisms to clean sidewalks of snow.	2006 Town Council/DPW
6-3 Improve difficult street crossings.	6-3-1 Engage Commission on	Ongoing COD

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
	Disabilities in this review.	
6-4 Improve sidewalks throughout the Town.	6-4-1 Develop a protocol for prioritizing projects and a rationalized system of maintenance.	2007 DPW/COD/Planning
6-5 Improve crossing safety at Watertown Square.	6-5-1 Ask Town Council to revisit this issue.	2006 Planning/COD
6-6 Do not allow parking on sidewalks.	6-6-1 Enforce existing laws 6-6-2 Install granite curbs to discourage parking on sidewalks.	Ongoing COD/Zoning Enforcement/Police
6-7 Promote fitness and encourage walking	6-7-1 Work with local newspaper to publish recreation information. 6-7-2 Initiate campaign to raise public awareness of physical fitness and start Town Hall walking program	2006 Health

## GOAL 7: IMPROVE THE URBAN FOREST

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
7-1 Increase tree planting on public property.	7-1-1 Ensure net gain of trees - that those planted exceed those taken down. 7-1-2 Update a comprehensive tree study to be integrated into the town's G.I.S. to be updated every five years. 7-1-3 Establish and advertise a program to encourage private funding of public forests and replanting. 7-1-4 Work with organizations such as Trees for Watertown to increase tree plantings on private property.	
7-2 Minimize harm to trees from road salt.	7-2-1 Continue to use snow clearance policies that minimize the use of road salt to the extent possible.	Ongoing DPW
7-3 Minimize removal of large caliper trees.	7-3-1 Explore passing an ordinance that would require public hearings	2006 Town Council

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
	for tree removal over a certain size on private property.	
7-4 Build sidewalks and curbs in a manner to facilitate tree plantings.	7-4-1 Evaluate DPW practices and their effect on urban trees.  7-4-2 Develop consistent town policy to encourage tree health.	2007 Tree Warden/DPW
7-5 Increase the number of trees on private property.	7-5-1 Develop public education program about value of trees	2007 Tree Warden
7-6 Encourage native fauna.	7-6-1 Consider wildlife value in town plantings and choose plants accordingly	
7-7 Create shaded areas.	7-7-1 Plant more shade trees in parks.	
7-8 Ensure landscape plans for public space are appropriate to the setting.	7-8-1 Have Tree Warden review and approve all landscape plans for all public projects.	

## GOAL 8: IMPROVE EDUCATION

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
8-1 Improve Charles River path signage.	8-1-1 Ask DCR for additional signage along the Charles River, regarding directional signs, interpretive nature information, distances, park policies and expectations of park users.  8-1-2 Ask DCR to add mile markers along the Charles River path.	2007 Planning  2007 Planning
8-2 Disseminate information about open space on the Town website.	8-2-1 Update website with more information about Watertown's open space and recreational resources.  8-2-2 Prepare improved open space and recreation maps with addresses. Provide bike path and bike lane maps.	2006 Planning  2007 Recreation
8-3 Make information about Superfund cleanup activities more	8-3-1	

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
easily available to the public.		
8-4 Improve education for dog owners on proper waste disposal techniques.	8-4-1 Provide signage or an easily understood and readily available handout.	2007 Health Dept and Town Clerk (licensing)
8-5 Prepare an annual report on progress toward the goals and objectives of this plan and include it in the town's Annual Report.		Annual - Planning
8-6 Provide improved education and signage for bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists.	8-6-1 Bike Committee to encourage DCR to post signage on bike path. 8-6-2 DPW to post "No Biking on Sidewalks" in congested areas 8-6-3 Bike Committee to ask bike shops to distribute "Rules of the Road" with bikes sold.	2007 Bike Committee, DPW

## GOAL 9: IMPROVE SAFETY IN OPEN SPACE AREAS

Objective	Actions	Year/Department
9-1 Make emergency services accessible to users of open space.	9-1-1 Request DCR to install emergency call boxes.	2007 Planning
9-2 Make parks safe at night.	9-2-1 Post signs that note parks are closed at dusk except in parks that have night time lighting.	2008 DPW
9-3 Make safe Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal and North Beacon Streets.	9-3-1 Aggressive police monitoring of open space	2006 Police
9-4 Reduce harmful effects of pesticide use	9-4-1- Minimize pesticide applications in all open space areas.	2006 DPW





## SECTION 10 - PUBLIC COMMENTS

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LETTER FROM MICHAEL DRISCOLL, WATERTOWN TOWN  
MANAGER

LETTER FROM JOHN HAWES, CHAIR, WATERTOWN PLANNING  
BOARD

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010



Michael J. Driscoll  
Town Manager

### TOWN OF WATERTOWN Office of the Town Manager

Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
Watertown, MA 02472  
Phone: 617-972-6465  
Fax: 617-972-6404  
www.watertown-ma.gov  
townmgr@watertown-ma.gov

March 19, 2008

Melissa Cryan, Grants Manager  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
Division of Conservation Services  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114-2524

**Re: Open Space & Recreation Plan**

Dear Ms. Cryan:

The Town of Watertown is pleased to submit the final draft of the Open Space & Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Community Development & Planning with assistance from the Open Space Plan Advisory Committee, chaired by Town Councilor Susan G. Falkoff.

As the Chief Executive Officer for the Town of Watertown I support and applaud the effort that went into developing the comprehensive Five-Year Action Plan. The Plan will be very useful in informing important decisions regarding the development of Capital Improvement Program (CIP) priorities and other public policy strategies.

I am particularly impressed by the comprehensive accessibility survey conducted by Adaptive Environments, Inc. with funding approved by the Watertown Commission on Disability. The Plan identifies numerous opportunities to improve existing open space, make better connections to such areas and consider opportunities to increase publicly accessible open space within the community.

It is with great pleasure we present this Plan to the Division of Conservation Services (DCS) and ask for your favorable consideration in approving the Plan. The Town of Watertown looks forward to collaborating with the DCS and Commonwealth of Massachusetts in accomplishing our shared objectives in providing the best open space and recreation opportunities possible for all the residents of Watertown.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Driscoll  
Town Manager



Gregory P. Watson, AICP  
Director  
gwatson@watertown-ma.gov

TOWN OF WATERTOWN  
Department of  
Community Development and Planning  
PLANNING OFFICE

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March 19, 2008

Melissa Cryan, Grants Manager  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
Division of Conservation Services  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114-2524

**Re: Open Space & Recreation Plan**

Dear Ms. Cryan:

The Watertown Planning Board is pleased to present this letter in support of the final draft to the update of the Watertown Open Space & Recreation Plan (the Plan).

The Planning Board worked closely with the Open Space & Recreation Plan Advisory Committee to develop recommendations to improve Watertown's important natural and recreational resources. The Board assigned two members to serve on the Open Space Advisory Board Committee to provide additional insight into other land use and strategic planning documents that would create a plan that is a cohesive component that is easily integrated into a broader comprehensive planning effort. The Plan also encourages sustainable development principles that are consistent with recent efforts to update Zoning to improve the relationship between the built environment and valued natural features.

Thank you for your consideration and review of the Plan. The Planning Board is pleased that the document is completed and looks forward to implementing recommendations within the Plan.

Sincerely,

John Hawes, Chair  
Watertown Planning Board

## SECTION 11 REFERENCES

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Maud deLeigh Hodges, **Crossroads on the Charles**. Watertown, MA, 1980.

Metropolitan District Commission, Parks Engineering and Construction Division, **Riverwalk-Charles River Reservation**. Plans prepared by Carol R. Johnson and Associates, Cambridge, MA, November 1995.

Metropolitan District Commission, Dan Driscoll (interview), Boston, MA, November 1995.

National Recreation and Parks Association, **National Park Recreation and Open Space Standards**. Alexandria, VA, 1983.

Diane Lauber, Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (letter), Westborough, MA, November 1995.

Thomas Planning Services. **Watertown Maximum Build-Out Potential**. May 1987.

Town of Brookline Conservation Commission, **Open Space In Brookline**. Brookline, MA, 1994.

United States Dept. Of Agriculture, **Middlesex County Soil Survey Report**. March 1991.

Waltham Planning Department, **Open Space and Recreation Plan**. Waltham, MA, 1994.

Watertown Department of Community Development and Planning, **Open Space and Recreation Plan** prepared by The Henderson Group, Boston, MA June 1987.

Watertown Department of Public Works, **The Recreational Space Conditions and Policy Report**, prepared by Applied Planning Technologies (A.P.T.), Cambridge, MA, 1995.

**APPENDIX A**

SECTION 504 REPORT (ADA)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TYPICALS

TYPICAL OPEN SPACE SURVEY TALLY

TYPICAL OPEN ENDED SURVEY RESPONSES #401-450

## SECTION 504 REPORT (ADA)

### **Part I Administrative Requirements**

1. **Designation of the 504 Coordinator**  
*Please see Exhibit A, letter from the Town Manager designating the Personnel Director as the town of Watertown's 504 Coordinator*
2. **Grievance Procedures**  
*Please see Exhibit B, Town of Watertown' Grievance Procedure for Handicap Compliance*
3. **Public Notification Requirements**  
*Please see Exhibit C, Town of Watertown' Affirmative Action Program*
4. **Participation of Individuals with Disabilities or Organizations Representing the Disabled Community**  
*Please see Exhibit D and E, Town Council resolution creating the Commission on Disabilities, and press release by the Town Manager appointing the Commission members and describing the duties and responsibilities thereof.*

### **Part II Program Accessibility**

1. **Transition Plan**  
*Please see Section 5-Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest, which identifies accessibility status, physical obstacles, and necessary changes for each facility; For more detailed information, please see the study completed for the Town, Watertown Open Space and Recreational Areas; Review for centered design characteristics, by the firm Adaptive Environments. Also please see Section 9-Five Year Action Plan, which provides a schedule for the changes.*
1. **Facility Inventory**  
*Please see Section 5-Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest, which identifies accessibility status for each facility.*

Exhibit A



Michael J. Driscoll  
Town Manager

TOWN OF WATERTOWN  
*Office of the Town Manager*

Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
Watertown, MA 02472  
Phone: 617-972-6465  
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www.watertown-ma.gov  
townmgr@watertown-ma.gov

March 19, 2008

Melissa Cryan, Grants Manager  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
Division of Conservation Services  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114-2524

Dear Ms. Cryan:

I am writing to inform you that the Town of Watertown's ADA/Section 504 Coordinator is Ms. Gayle Shattuck, Personnel Director.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Shattuck at 617-972-6443.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Driscoll  
Town Manager

Cc: G. Shattuck, Personnel Director  
G. Watson, Director of Community Development & Planning

Exhibit B

**5. Discipline and Discharge Grievances**

No employee covered by this Agreement shall be disciplined or discharged except for just cause. Before any action affecting the employment or compensation of any employee referred to in the preceding sentence is taken, the employee shall be given a written statement of the specific reason(s) for the contemplated action. No disciplinary penalty (including discharge) in excess of five (5) days shall be imposed until after a hearing before the Town Manager or Personnel Director. The Union has the right to go directly to arbitration for disciplinary cases (including discharge) over five (5) days.

**6. Arbitration**

A grievance which was not resolved at Step 3 under the Grievance Procedure may be submitted by the Union to arbitration. The arbitration may be initiated by filing with the Town and the American Arbitration Association a request for arbitration. The notice shall be filed within thirty (30) work days after denial of the grievance at Step 3 under the Grievance Procedure. The Voluntary Labor Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association shall apply to the proceeding.

**ARTICLE III**  
**NON-DISCRIMINATION**

**Section A.**

The UNION agrees that as the sole and exclusive bargaining agent for all employees in the units described above, and as recognized by the EMPLOYER, it will continue to act, negotiate and bargain collectively for all employees in the units, and shall be responsible for representing the interest of all such employees without discrimination, and without regard to Union membership or participation in Union activities. The UNION further agrees to continue its policy of recognizing that membership in the UNION is voluntary and is open to all employees in the Units without discrimination and without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, or marital status.

**Section B.**

In its employment practices the EMPLOYER agrees to continue its policy of dealing with all persons without discrimination and without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age or marital status, and without regard to Union membership, participation in union activities or to the assertion by any employee of any rights under this Agreement.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**SALARIES**

**Section A. Wages**

Effective July 1, 1994, the salary for all employees covered by this Agreement shall be in accordance with the classification plan and schedule set out in Appendix "A" and Appendix "B" which are attached hereto and incorporated into this Agreement. Such salaries have been increased by 2% effective July 1, 1994, as reflected in the Salary Grid Tables, Appendix "A". The remainder of the wage increases are as follows:

Effective July 1, 1995	2.0%
Effective July 1, 1996	1.0%
Effective January 1, 1997	1.0%

(see Appendix "A" for Salary Grid Tables)

The Town may hire new employees above Step 1 in the THA salary grid, but must hire within the grade and step to which the job titles are allocated, and the Town must notify the Union in writing of such hiring.

The Town may establish new titles and job descriptions, but must bargain over the proposed salary after notice to the Union, and the Town may not implement the new title until negotiating requirements are satisfied in accordance with the law.

**Part III: Employment Practices**

Please see Exhibit C., Town of Watertown Affirmative Action Program, which states the Town's recognition and affirms its legal and moral obligation to provide equal employment opportunity and equal access to all fundamental benefits of employment.

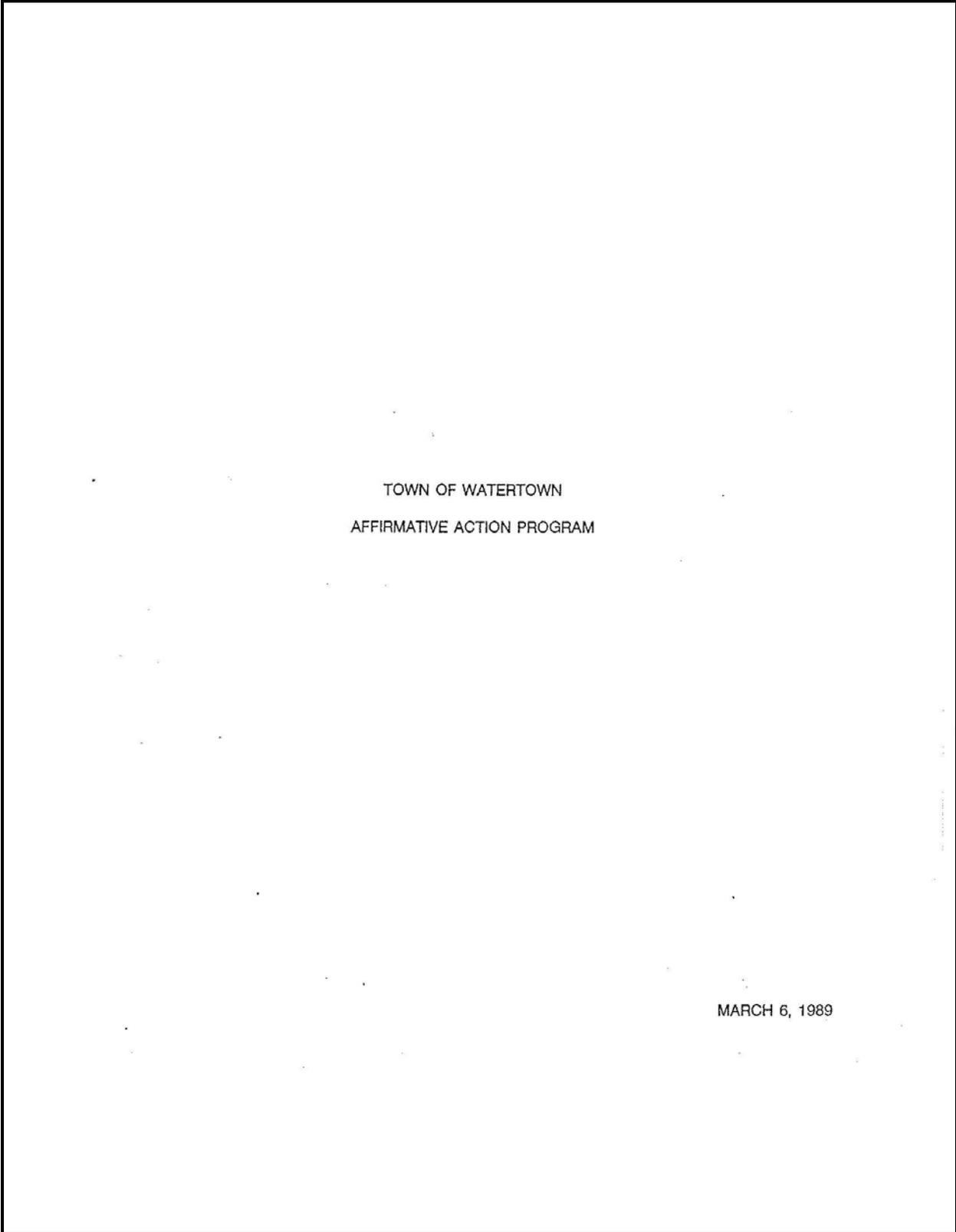
Also, please see Exhibit F. Which is excerpted from the current union contract and is the Non-Discrimination clause, and Exhibit G. Which is a sample format job announcement which includes a nondiscrimination statement.

Continued

Grievance Procedure For Handicap Compliance

- VI. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Grievance Committee actions, within ten working days they may file a formal complaint with the Town Manager.
- VII. Within 10 working days of formal notice of the complaint, the Town Manager will meet to review the complaint. The complainant must be notified of such meeting and may be present with counsel if they so choose.
- VIII. Within 10 working days from the day of review, the Town Manager will either (i) resolve the complaint through reasonable accommodation, (ii) dismiss the complaint as not relevant to the handicapped regulations, or, (iii) adopt plans for needed structural changes to reach compliance. The Complainant, the Grievance Committee, and the Section 504 coordinator must be notified, either in writing or by other appropriate formal notification.
- IX. The decision of the Town Manager shall be final.

Exhibit C



# Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

## TOWN OF WATERTOWN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

### PREAMBLE

The Town of Watertown hereby recognizes and affirms its legal obligation to provide equal employment opportunity. The Town as a public entity reaffirms its moral obligation to provide all persons equal access to all fundamental benefits of employment.

It is the policy of the Town of Watertown to hire well qualified people to perform the many tasks necessary to provide quality service to the residents of Watertown at a reasonable cost.

Any employee or personnel practice which inadvertently discriminates against some of our employees or applicants for employment ultimately injures the entire Town of Watertown. The Town's personnel policies and practices have been designed to provide equal opportunity for all persons. All employment decisions, policies and programs have been made and will continue to be made and implemented without regard to an individual's race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age.

The Town's Affirmative Action Program is designed to further its commitment to insure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin. This program encompasses all aspects of the employment process. The Town will provide equal employment opportunity for all persons and will recruit and administer hiring, working conditions, benefits and privileges of employment, compensation, training, appointments for advancement including upgrading and promotion, transfer and terminations of advancement including upgrading and promotion, transfers and terminations of employment including layoffs in a non-discriminatory fashion.

The Town will attempt to remedy our employment pattern and vigorously recruit minorities and females. The Town will attempt to contact minorities whose names appear on our civil service lists and actively recruit them for appointment.

A major goal of the Affirmative Action Program is to insure that the Town utilize to the fullest extent possible the valuable resources of its female and minority employees at all levels of municipal government.

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Town of Watertown will adhere to the provisions of all federal and state laws governing equal opportunity in employment, affirmative action, and non-discrimination in municipal services. Such laws presently include, but are not limited to, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151B; Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and Federal Executive Order 11246, as amended. In implementing this policy, the Town intends to comply fully with the letter and the spirit of the law.

The Town will, without regard to circumstances of race, color, religion, sex national origin or age:

- i. Hire persons who are qualified to perform the defined duties and responsibilities of the position to be filled.

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

2. Provide all employees with the privileges and benefits associated with employment.
3. Promote and transfer employees on a non-discriminatory basis.
4. Provide all qualified employees with an equal opportunity to participate in applicable training and development programs.
5. Compensate all employees on the principle of equal pay for equal work.
6. Establish and/or maintain all employee facilities on a non-discriminatory basis.

The Town will not limit, segregate, or classify its employees in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of opportunities, or adversely affect his or her status as an employee because of such employees race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age.

The Town will not discharge any employee because of his/her race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age.

The Town will continue to administer all personnel activities such as compensation, benefits, transfers, tuition assistance, social and recreational programs, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or age.

Affirmative action requires more than vigilance in the elimination of discriminatory barriers on the grounds of race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, national ancestry, age and sex. It must also entail positive and aggressive measures to ensure equal opportunity in internal personnel practices and in those programs which can affect persons outside of town government. This affirmative action shall include efforts necessary to remedy the effects of present and past discriminatory patterns and any action necessary to guarantee equal opportunity for all people.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Assistant to the Town Manager/Personnel Director shall be responsible for overseeing the execution of the Affirmative Action Program. S/he shall also act as the Town's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer. The Personnel Office is located in the first floor of Town Hall. Responsibilities shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Development and refinement of the Affirmative Action Plan. Dissemination of the policy on equal employment opportunities, both internally and externally.
2. Identification of problem areas and goals established to eliminate trouble spots.
3. Audit of hiring and promotion patterns to insure that goals and objectives are met.
4. Periodic discussions with department heads to insure that policies are understood and are being followed.
5. Periodic review of qualifications of all females and minorities to make certain that female and minority employees are given full opportunities for transfers and promotions.

Exhibit D



Town Council

EXHIBIT D

TOWN OF WATERTOWN

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING • WATERTOWN, MA 02172  
(617) 972-6470 • FAX (617) 972-6403

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
129 23 11 28 AM '94

ORDINANCE #94-05

O-94-05

AN ORDINANCE CREATING THE WATERTOWN COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

WHEREAS, the provisions of Section 8J of Chapter 40 of the Massachusetts General Laws allow for the creation of a town Commission on Disability, "to cause the full integration and participation of people with disabilities"; and

WHEREAS, said Section 8J lays out the responsibilities for said Commission, including, but not limited to, research into the local problems affecting persons with disabilities and advice and assistance to municipal officials and employees in ensuring compliance with state and federal laws, rules, and regulations affecting people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the City known as the Town of Watertown has been extremely well-served by the Watertown Committee on Disabilities, which has done yeoman service for the entire community of Watertown but has not adopted the provisions of said Section 8J; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of the provisions of said Section 8J would allow for the expansion and extension of the work of said committee, and would enhance the stature of said committee; and

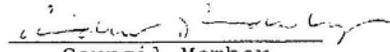
WHEREAS, said adoption would further serve as an additional endorsement by the Town Council of the City known as the Town of Watertown of the goals of said committee and as a statement of commitment by said Council towards the full integration of persons with disabilities into all aspects of the life of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, that the City known as the Town of Watertown does hereby accept the provisions of Section 8J of Chapter 40 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and form a Commission on Disability subject to said provisions.

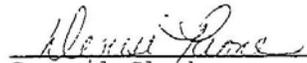
Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

O-94-05

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, that the Town Manager shall appoint the members of said Commission as quickly as may be practicable.

  
Council Member

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above Ordinance was adopted by a vote of 9 for and 0 against on January 25, 1994.

  
Council Clerk

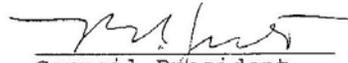
  
Council President

Exhibit E

PRESS RELEASE

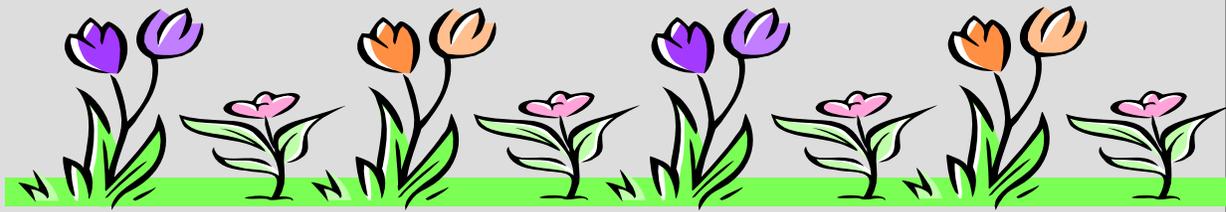
Town Manager Michael J. Driscoll is pleased to announce the appointment of the nine members to the Watertown Commission on Disability.

The nine members are as follows: Brian Charlson, 57 Grandview Avenue; Harold Craig, 33 Kimball Road; Francis X. Galligan, 14 Grandview Avenue; Albert Gayzagian, 74 Lincoln Street; John Edward Gillis, 465 Arsenal Street #706; Alex Liazos, 11 Parker Street; Laura Oftedahl, 104 Coolidge Hill Road #7; Diane Shepard, 12 Swetts Court; Councillor Marilyn Petitto Devaney, 98 Westminster Avenue.

The Watertown Town Council, by unanimous vote had accepted provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 8J, to form a "Watertown Commission on Disability." The new Commission on Disability will:

1. Research local concerns experienced by people with disabilities and their families;
2. Advise/assist municipal officials and employees in ensuring compliance with state and federal laws affecting people with disabilities;
3. Coordinate/carry out programs designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities and their families;
4. Assist with the development of policies, procedures, and services affecting people with disabilities and their families;
5. Provide information, referrals, guidance, and technical assistance in all matters pertaining to disability;
6. Help coordinate activities of other local groups organized from similar purposes.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TYPICALS



It's Spring! Time to Think & Talk About

# Open Space

Please Join the Open Space &  
Recreation Plan Update Task Force

At a Public Hearing

The Task Force will discuss the progress of the Open Space & Recreation Plan, share results of the Open Space Survey & gather your valuable input regarding Open Space in the Town of Watertown.

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

7:00 p.m.

Town Council Chamber  
Watertown Administration Building

Questions? Call the Planning Department (617) 972-6417

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**Open Space and Recreation Plan Update Task Force**

Tuesday, April 5, 2005  
7:00 p.m.  
Town Council Chambers  
Administration Building

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Update Task Force will hold a Public Hearing to solicit input from the members of the public regarding the 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update. The Task Force will present its findings to date, identify changes since the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan, present preliminary goals and objectives and gather community input for further development of the plan.

For more information, contact Mary Crain at the Planning Department (617) 972-6417.

Watertown Tab & Press, February 18, 2005

**PRESS RELEASE**

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT**

Along with their census forms this year, Watertown residents received a questionnaire about their current use of recreational resources and their thoughts about future improvements. This questionnaire was written by the town's Open Space Committee, an ad hoc group charged with fulfilling a state mandate to update its 5 year Open Space Plan. Community input is crucial to the success of its work!

The Open Space committee designed the questionnaire to be as open-ended as possible, with opportunity for residents to share ideas or concerns it hadn't thought to consider. In addition, the committee is seeking input in some specific area. For example, how important are bicycle paths to Watertown residents. If there were more paths, would they be used more?

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

The Community Preservation Act is an optional state measure which allows communities to impose a small surcharge on property taxes (with exemptions for seniors and low-income homeowners) that is matched by state money, as a way to raise money for open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing. Approximately 75 communities in MA have passed this measure to date. Is there sufficient interest in Watertown to put this question to the voters?

Closing the section of Greenough Boulevard between Arsenal and North Beacon streets to motorized traffic is a long-held dream of former Conservation Commission chair Diana Proctor. Diana was a moving force behind the creation of Arsenal Park. Does the community support exploring this idea?

The Open Space Committee has been meeting monthly since last spring to create a draft update to the Open Space Plan. Members were chosen to reflect all the relevant town departments and commissions and are: Town Councilor Susan Falkoff (chair), Charles Bering (Conservation Commission), Peter Brooks (Bike Committee), Jeff Brown (Planning Board) Roger Erickson (Historical Commission), Leo Martin (Conservation Commission), Gerry Mee (DPW Superintendent), Tony Paolillo (Chair, School Committee), Bruce Roberts (Conservation & Preservation agent, Tree Warden), Juana Salazar (Planning Board), Tom Sullivan (Recreation Department Director) and assisted by Mary Crain, Senior Planner with the Planning Department and Daphne Collins of the Conservation Commission.

The public will have another opportunity to give input on March 1, when the Open Space Committee is holding a hearing on the draft plan it has written. Watch for details of this event... and meanwhile please give thoughtful attention to this community survey. For further information, contact Mary Crain at 617-972-6417.

### TYPICAL OPEN SPACE SURVEY TALLY

WATERTOWN 2005 OPEN SPACE SURVEY FINAL COUNTS Q 3,4, & 5								
	Counting Blanks and Don't Knows					Not Including Blanks & Don't Knows		
Total	3A Yes	3A No	3A ?			3a Yes	3a No	
2643	1613	642	388	2643		1613	642	2255
	61%	24%	15%	100%		72%	28%	
	3B Yes	3B No	3B ?			3B yes	3B No	
	1447	715	481	2643		1447	715	2162
	55%	27%	18%	100%		67%	33%	
	4A Yes	4A No	4A ?			4a yes	4a no	
	1607	489	547	2643		1607	489	2096

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

WATERTOWN 2005 OPEN SPACE SURVEY FINAL COUNTS Q 3,4, & 5								
	61%	19%	21%	100%		77%	23%	
	4B Yes	4B No	4B ?			4B yes	4B No	
	1437	529	677	2643		1437	529	1966
	54%	20%	26%	100%		73%	27%	
	5 Yes	5 No	5 ?	weekend				
	783	649	1076	135	2643			
	30%	25%	5%	0%	100%			

### TYPICAL OPEN ENDED SURVEY RESPONSES #401-450

401	Promote walking to school. Build a student drop off area in Moxley Playground to reduce traffic jams on Waverley Avenue. Let parents know that there are parks and open spaces available for their kids to combat obesity. LG: There are bike lanes all over now that never get used. Why waste more money on something else that won't get used.
402	Bikes should have bells to let you know they are coming up behind walkers, esp. those with dogs. The parking lot for Upper Charles River Reservation should be for people using the path, not for people in the office buildings. It is often impossible to find a space for park usage.
403	Remove some trees for better view of river. The more bike and ped paths the better. LG: on Sundays for recreation. Make Watertown Sq. beautiful, always wondered why traffic can't be re-routed. Put outdoor cafés there.
404	LG: no, using it cuts out about six stop lights and is convenient to Allston/Brighton
405	
406	
407	
408	Maintain current parks and open spaces. Q3: good ideas, but have no use for paths
409	No dogs should be allowed in parks
410	
411	Don't use pesticides or fertilizers on the lawns in the park - they are very dangerous for kids, animals and the environment. Have more shade around the playgrounds - more trees! More sprinkler parks.
412	Regular cleaning and maintenance of river path, esp. on West side of Charles between Arsenal Street and Eliot Bridge. A lot of sand builds up in this area and vegetation overhangs the path. During construction at the intersection of Galen/Mt. Auburn/Rte. 20 construction workers did not provide adequate pedestrian paths. People had to walk in street to get to crosswalk. Please have police details enforce the traffic management plans provided by the design engineers. Consider widening river path to consistent 6-8'. Build outdoor roller hockey rink.
413	Gates on the park off Rte 16, Watertown Street is very dangerous.
414	
415	
416	Don't know where LG is. Opposed to closing that part of GB that runs from Arsenal Street to the Eliot Bridge.
417	No to closing LG. Would force traffic to travel a distance to get to No. Beacon for very little use of additional parking. Any additions to tax bills will force long time residents to sell homes.
418	Clean up parks.
419	LG: no because it helps relieve vehicle traffic with another place to go.

## Watertown Open Space Plan 2005 - 2010

420	More shade at playgrounds.
421	LG: yes, reduction in greenhouse gases; improvement and enhancement for recreational use.
422	
423	More benches along river path. LG: no, it is a lovely drive through. Open up more river viewing areas along Charles River Road.
424	More bike paths. More canoe races to amuse my wife and me on our river walks.
425	Maintain public right of way using the great cinder trails through the Arsenal complex. Please refurbish this. Make Saltonstall Park and the Delta more visually appealing. Bike paths need to be maintained (pavement and foliage). LG: yes, need safe places for bicyclists. Consider south end residents. Casey Park should be a priority. Enhanced parking for Victory Field would be a plus.
426	Add a disc golf course if there is a suitable park. Doesn't know LG but supports the concept.
427	LG: no it makes a great shortcut.
428	
429	Town should enforce ordinances that require keeping sidewalks clear of snow. Pedestrians are forced to walk in road and this discourages use of public transportation.
430	More lighting, parking.
431	DPW (maybe means DCR??) needs to maintain bushes better.
432	Smooth paths broken by tree roots. Light the paths better. Keep up the good work, the improvements are great!
433	More tennis courts. Extended pool hours and season. Improve condition of Pleasant Street. LG: yes, it seems unnecessary for motor traffic.
434	Better upkeep of existing parks. Q 3: there is too much traffic in that area already. It is too dangerous for children to ride bikes, even on a bike path.
435	Reliable access to MDC pool on Pleasant Street. Last two years it has been closed way too much. Would love some bicycle lanes on busier streets and near all public schools. LG: yes, if not full time, then on weekends like Memorial Drives, especially April through November.
436	
437	LG: no, drive it frequently to get to the recycle center to avoid traffic at the Square and Arsenal Street.
438	Install a fitness trail. As much as possible bike paths should be run away from motor vehicle paths to avoid injuries. In all cases signals should be installed to warn bikers of intersections. LG: not, closing it would increase traffic on other roads.
439	I would like a dog but town has no dog space! Need dog parks.
440	More soccer fields. Wider running/bike paths.
441	Make the existing path along the river wider and better lit. LG: sounds like a great idea.
442	
443	
444	
445	Better lights at the track for night walkers. Tennis court is lit up enough to play why not the track?
446	
447	Plow track in winter. Do not cut grass when walkers are on track, stop pesticides! The bikepaths are an invitation to crime as is the Arsenal Mall. Erect fencing at Lowell to make it safe to sled on Orchard Street before a child sleds out onto the street.
448	Make the railway bike path a reality all the way from Watertown Square to Lexington.
449	
450	New benches near the river on Charles River Road. Removal of overgrown brush.