

# **CHAPTER 1: Plan Summary**

## **A. Purpose**

The overall purpose of the 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is to serve as a guide for protecting, managing, improving, and expanding Framingham's open space and recreation resources in the face of continuing development pressures. More specifically, the purposes of this OSRP are:

- To identify unique open space and recreation assets and places that have ecological, recreational, civic, historic and/or scenic value;
- To prioritize the open space and recreation needs for all citizens of Framingham;
- To identify specific goals, objectives, and recommended priority actions; and
- To qualify the Town for State and Federal cost-sharing funds that might be available for capital improvement and acquisition projects.

## **B. Process**

This Open Space and Recreation Plan is an update of an earlier version of the Plan completed in 2008. As part of the implementation of the 2008 Plan, an Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Working Group (OSRPIWG) was established in 2010. The OSRPIWG is a policy and implementation group that includes representatives from the Board of Selectmen, Town Manager's office, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Department of Public Works and the Community and Economic Development office. The OSRPIWG met throughout 2010 to 2013 to discuss and implement priority recommendations from the 2008 Plan. As the group most familiar with the 2008 Plan the OSRPIWG was the logical choice to prepare the 2013 update. The OSRPIWG represents the various boards and commissions involved in open space and recreation lands and programs. Assisted by staff from Community and Economic Development, Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Parks and Recreation, the OSRPIWG Committee undertook a comprehensive analysis of Framingham's Open Space and Recreation resources. Inventories of the Town's open space, recreation, and historic and cultural resources were updated. The Town's open space preservation and recreation needs were assessed through public forums, widely distributed surveys, and meetings with municipal staff and various boards, commissions and committees. The labors of this effort have resulted in the seven (7) year action plan.

## **C. Goals**

The end result of the planning process is a coordinated set of goals and objectives and a seven-year action plan that outlines specific tasks to meet the Town's open space and recreation goals. The open space and recreation goals are as follows:

- Maintenance and improvement of the current inventory of active recreational facilities;
- Maintenance and improvement of the current inventory of conservation and open space parcels;

- Conservation of natural resources and open space to protect water resources, wildlife habitat, and horticultural, agricultural and sylvan opportunities, and passive recreational opportunities;
- Creation of new recreational facilities and programs to meet resident needs as appropriate; and
- Undertake other town-wide efforts that will support open space and recreation.

## **D. Implementation**

Action items designed to achieve each goal are enumerated in the Seven Year Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies goals, objectives, detailed actions and responsible parties. Since this OSRP reflects the substantive input from and the broad consensus of many Town departments, boards, commissions and committees, non-profit organizations, and resident volunteers, and spells out specific attainable tasks, we are hopeful that implementation will be swift and effective.

## **E. Highlights of the Action Plan**

The OSRPIWG believes that a few of the objectives and actions are particularly important; they are critical in achieving the stated goals or because they support other objectives and actions. They are discussed briefly below.

### **1. Ensure aggressive implementation of the plan.**

Action 5A1: Continue the Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Working Group (OSRPIWG) to monitor progress of the plan, communicate with involved departments, and conduct research and develop recommendations as noted in this plan

Action 5B1: Research the list of possible funding mechanisms listed in Ch 7 and develop a report recommending funding strategies for Framingham

Action 5B2: Appoint a new CPA study committee

### **2. Focus on the maintenance of existing facilities and programs.**

Action 1A1: Undertake actions identified in Table 7-1 and Map 10 for Recreation Facilities in Need of Improvements

Action 2A3: Continue and expand the conservation land steward program and workdays to help maintain and improve open space parcels

### **3. Protect open space in Framingham**

Action 3A1: Research private land, tax title land, other town land, etc. and identify priority parcels for acquisition (based on size, current land use, ecological diversity, presence of rare species, adjacency to protected land, etc.)

#### **4. Create non-motorized corridors in Framingham**

Objective 4A: Create and complete corridors for non-motorized passage that serve as greenways and provide access to passive and active recreation facilities, places of work, school, public transportation connections, or other points of interest in town

Objective 4B: Create new parks, playgrounds and passive facilities

Objective 4E: Coordinate enhanced public access to the aqueducts with the MWRA