

Open Space and Recreation Plan

OPRP Working Group
Framingham, Massachusetts
September 2025

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Staff

2025 Open Space and Recreation Plan Working Group

- Charlie Sisitsky --- Mayor
- Sarkis Sarkisian --- Director of Planning and Community Development
- Jim Snyder --- Director of Parks and Recreation
- Alison Eliot ---- Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation
- Bob Lewis --- Director of the Department of Public Works
- Eric Johnson --- City Engineer
- Rebecca Nau --- Conservation Administrator
- Mike Tusino --- Chief Operating Officer
- Geoffrey Kovar --- GIS Manager
- Shawn Luz --- Sustainability Coordinator
- Dave Correia --- ADA Coordinator
- Matthew J. Hayes --- DPW Transportation Engineering
- Mollie Febus --- PCD Planner
- Yvonne D. Johnson --- PCD Planner

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Plan Summary

A. Purpose

The overall purpose of the 2020 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 City 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 and updated in 2013. 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 Mayor’s Office, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Division, Department of Public Works, and the Planning and Community Development office. The OSRPIWG met quarterly to discuss and implement priority recommendations from the 2013 Plan.

In 2017, the Town of Framingham voted to enact a new charter, and on January 1, 2018, the Town of Framingham became the City of Framingham. The OSRPIWG lost some of its members to this change in government as new structures for governance were put in place and new processes established. In 2025, the OSRPIWG was formally re-established, with plans to continue meeting on a quarterly basis.

The OSRPIWG represents the various boards and commissions involved in open space and recreation lands and programs. Currently made up primarily of staff from Planning and Community 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 City’s open space, recreation, and historic and cultural resources were updated. The City’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 a new ten-year action plan.

Public Participation

Responses to the citizen survey were collected over a two-month period from April to June 2019. There were 332 responses to the survey (**see Appendix D**). In addition, 33 residents attended a public visioning workshop on May 22, 2019, at the Public Library. The survey and public visioning workshop were advertised thoroughly to the public through social media posts, government channel PSAs, posted flyers, and email blasts. A communications plan was developed prior to outreach, with various channels organized by date and assigned responsibility. Residents from every City Council district provided input, although nearly three-quarters of the survey responses came from Districts 1 through 5, which comprised areas north of Route 9. In 2025, City Councilors provided input to assess further needs for their constituents regarding open space and recreation.

C. Goals

The result of the planning process is a coordinated set of goals and objectives, along with a seven-year action plan that outlines specific tasks to meet the City's open space and recreation goals. The open space and recreation goals have been modified since the 2013 plan to better align with City and State priorities. The Goals are broken down into categories as follows:

Goal 1: Preserve existing open space and restore developed land in environmentally sensitive areas

Objective 1.1: Identify and acquire priority parcels

Objective 1.2: Improve land protection mechanisms

Goal 2: Expand trail network and connectivity

Objective 2.1: Develop a comprehensive trail system

Objective 2.2: Improve trail infrastructure and maintenance

Objective 2.3: Improve accessibility

Goal 3: Enhance existing parks and recreation facilities

Objective 3.1: Upgrade priority recreation facilities

Objective 3.2: Improve accessibility

Goal 4: Improve administrative practices and coordination across departments

Objective 4.1: Enhance information systems

Objective 4.2: Foster coordination and collaboration

Goal 5: Promote environmental sustainability and equity

Objective 5.1: Enhance Sustainable Transportation

Objective 5.2: Implement Environmental Protection Measures

Objective 5.3: Promote Environmental Education and Outreach

D. Implementation

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

Chapter 2: Introduction

A. Introduction to the 2020 Plan

This edition of the Open Space and Recreation Plan (Framingham has had six previous OSRPs: 1981, 1990, 1996, 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2020) has been updated to reflect new priorities for the protection of open space and enhancement of recreation, and new opportunities for Framingham to realize its open space and recreation goals.

B. Statement of Purpose

The overall purpose of an 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, 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 City for State and Federal cost-sharing funds that might be available for capital improvement and acquisition projects.

C. Vision for Framingham

Given Framingham’s variety of natural and recreational resources, the City has the potential to provide residents and visitors with access to open space and recreation as integral parts of their daily lives, and to preserve open space for the long term. For 2020, we have begun organizing our goals into two broad themes: Access & Inclusion and Maintenance & Sustainability.

Through this Open Space and Recreation Plan, Framingham shall commit itself to making sure that future planning, development, maintenance, and public education efforts will help:

- Preserve natural ecosystems, corridors, and historic landscapes;
- Provide passive and active recreational opportunities that are accessible to all citizens of Framingham;
- Provide pedestrian opportunities for all citizens of Framingham; and
- Enhance the quality of life, economic health, and sense of community in Framingham.

For 2025, we have begun organizing our goals into five broad themes: Connectivity, Accessibility, Maintenance, Improvements, and Preservation. This vision will help Framingham realize many of the benefits of open space protection:

- Parks and open space often increase the value of nearby properties, along with property tax revenue;
- Parks and open space attract businesses and trained employees in search of a high quality of life;
- Parks and open space attract tourists and boost recreation spending;
- Parks and open space reduce obesity and health care costs by supporting exercise and recreation;
- Working lands, such as farms and forests, usually contribute more money to a community than the costs of the services they require; and,
- Conserved open space helps safeguard drinking water, purify the air, and prevent flooding – services that are provided much more expensively by other means.
- Preserving open space encourages a more compact development pattern, which is more efficient in terms of transportation, public service provision, and energy use compared to a more dispersed development pattern.
- Parks and open space help preserve valuable biodiversity through habitat protection.

D. Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Working Group

In March 2019, the OSRPIWG kicked off its planning for the 2020 Plan update. This Working Group was comprised of:

- Mayor Yvonne M. Spicer
- Division of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs
- Division of Planning & Community Development
- Department of Public Works

The Working Group was staffed by staff from the Planning & Community Development Division and the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs. Staff was responsible for:

- Coordinating meetings,
- Gathering data and updating information, and
- Drafting the revised document.

After some delays in 2021, a new Working Group was established in July 2025 to finalize the plan, which began in 2020. This Working Group has plans to meet quarterly for the continuation of this plan. It is comprised of:

-
- The Mayor’s Office
 - Division of Planning and Community Development
 - Division of Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Affairs
 - Department of Public Works
 - Conservation Commission
 - Sustainability Coordinator
 - Disability Coordinator

E. Public Participation and Input

Public input was an essential component of this plan revision. Every effort was made to assess the needs of all population groups represented in Framingham. Public input was obtained in a variety of ways:

- **OSRPIWG meetings**

Ten (10) regular meetings were held between March 2019 and October 2020. At those meetings, Working Group members brainstormed, reviewed the 2013 plan, crafted an updated public survey, updated the Parcel Prioritization list (which had been updated last in 2017), vetted and annotated maps and lists, achieved consensus on drafts, discussed comments from the public and other municipal boards, and crafted the final plan to be submitted to the state.

- **Public forums**

Two public forums were held (in-person on May 22, 2019, and online on November 9, 2020). These public forums were publicized through press releases, social media, and email notifications to interested parties.

- **Local cable television**

Both public forums were videotaped and aired on the local cable network.

- **Citizen questionnaire**

The Working Group revised and updated the 2013 questionnaire, ultimately reducing the length of the survey to make it more likely that people would fill it all out. The 26 questions focused on the types of recreational facilities and activities and open space priorities that City residents may believe to be important for Framingham’s future. The questionnaire was translated into Spanish and Portuguese. The questionnaire was made available on the City website and at the public libraries, the Mayor’s office, the Conservation Commission office, the Park and Recreation Office, and the Planning and Community Development office. The survey was advertised on the City’s social media as well as through “Notify Me” email blasts. The link to the online version was printed on flyers for the public meeting and shared with partner

organizations, including Downtown Framingham, Inc., and the Sudbury Valley Trustees. In addition, the group hand-delivered hard copies of the survey and the meeting flyers in three languages to one of the directors of the resource center at the Pelham Apartments, one of the larger mixed-income complexes in the district. The Planning and Community Development office received 331 surveys.

- **Other city boards' input**

OSRPIWG members went to each of their respective boards and notified them of the survey.

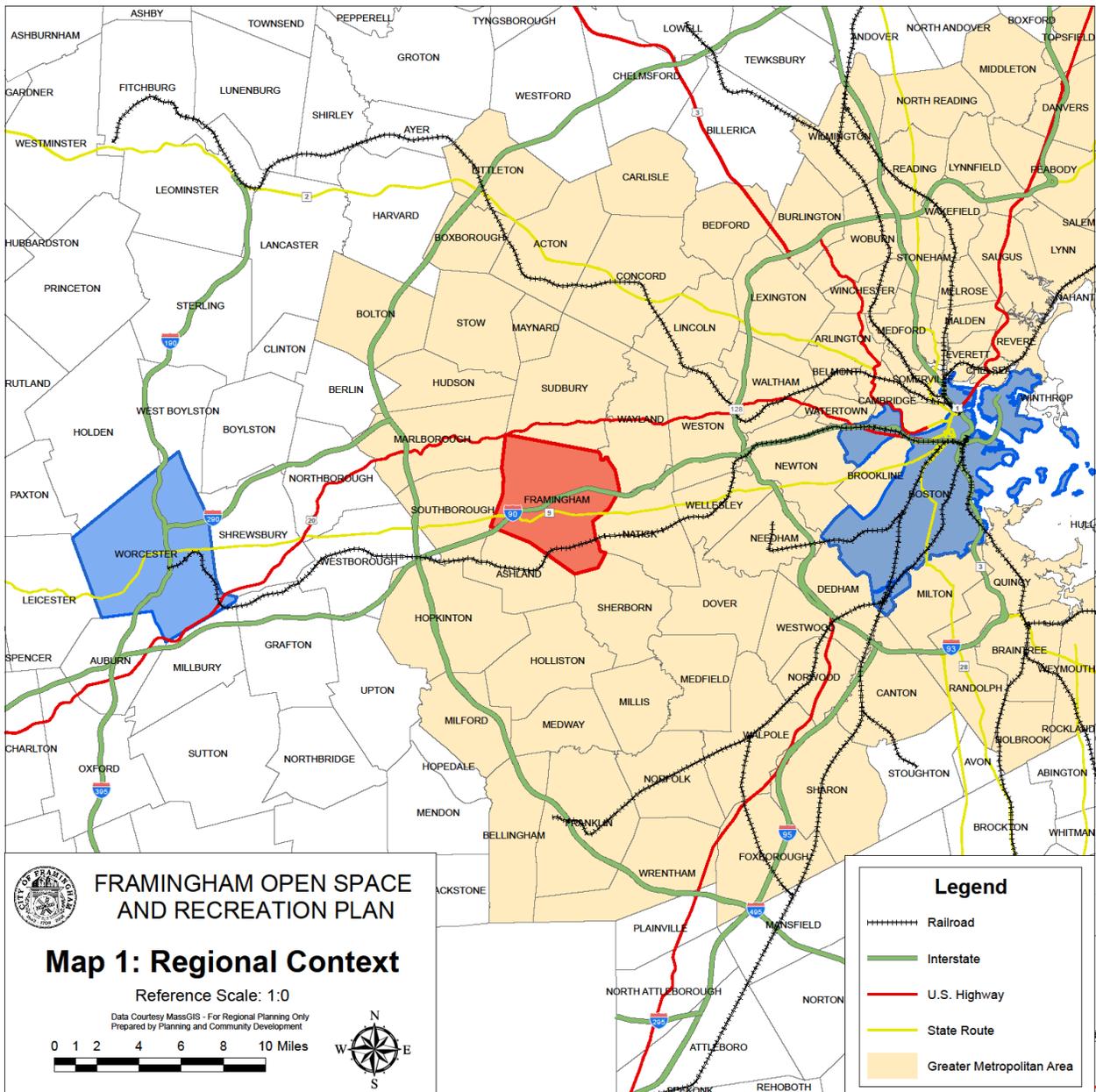
Enhanced Outreach for Environmental Neighborhoods

Framingham is an environmental justice community (EJ) with a large low-income and minority population compared to adjacent communities (see Map 2: Environmental Justice Communities). The population density on the south side of Framingham primarily comprises census tracts that meet all three environmental justice criteria (see Population and Housing Characteristics in Chapter 3). Special outreach measures were taken throughout the planning process to gain participation from the environmental justice neighborhoods. Beginning with the kick-off Press Release, which was distributed through the City's standard media channels, including Spanish and Portuguese media contacts. Multi-lingual flyers were placed in City Hall public-facing offices, the library, and the Callahan Senior Center.

The City has also built relationships with the managers of specific high-poverty housing developments and works closely with them to engage the residents in those areas. The first (in-person) OSRP public hearings/Community Visioning was held in an environmental justice neighborhood, downtown in the main library, and the staff worked with administrators in some of the low-income housing there to distribute paper copies of both the meeting notification and the public survey, in English, Spanish, and Portuguese (See Appendix D)

Chapter 3: Community Setting

A. Regional Context



Framingham is located in the MetroWest Region of the Greater Boston Metropolitan Area, halfway between Worcester and Boston. Framingham is a central hub along the transit corridor that includes two major roadways, I-90 and Route 9, as well as the MBTA Commuter Rail.

Framingham is characterized by its diversity. From the landscape to development patterns to population demographics, Framingham is a mosaic of variety and contrast. The steep hills and shallow bedrock in the north are composed of large undeveloped parcels, many of which are protected through state, municipal, or non-profit programs. By contrast, the relatively flat southern portion of Framingham is a densely developed matrix of small parcels with some areas of open space, most of which abut the reservoirs. The north and south portions of the City are divided by Route 9, which runs east to west, and I-90, which has a more southwest to northeasterly route.

Framingham has taken steps to improve pedestrian and cyclist access through the use of rail trails. The Cochituate Rail Trail connects Saxonville Village with downtown Natick to the east, crossing both Route 9 and Route 3. The Bruce Freeman Trail, still under development, would connect Framingham to a 30-mile, multi-use trail extending northward from Sudbury to Lowell, with the ultimate goal of connecting the City to both the Bay Circuit Trail and East Coast Greenway. This would expand access within Framingham and to the broader regional community, while also contributing to economic development.

Located in the headwaters of the Sudbury River Watershed, which is part of the larger drainage area known as the Concord Watershed, the City of Framingham drains northeast into Wayland and Sudbury.

B. History of the Community

B1. Introduction

Framingham, a community with a storied history, has been integral in many major events in US history and the Commonwealth. Located between Boston and Worcester, the area now known as Framingham was originally inhabited by the Native American group known as the Nipmuc.

The Nipmuc were a loose federation of tribes, which at various times were allied with or subjected to the more powerful Native American confederacies that surrounded them. As part of the Algonquin language group, the Nipmuc practiced agriculture, hunting, and gathering, living by the streams and ponds of the area. This tribe inhabited areas from central Massachusetts to Connecticut.

Much of the land that would become Framingham upon its incorporation as a town in 1700 was owned by Thomas Danforth, an Englishman. While the area was colloquially known as “Danforth’s Farm,” it was given the name Framingham in honor of Danforth’s birthplace in Framlingham, England – although the “L” was dropped before Framingham was incorporated.

Early European settlers in Framingham were primarily focused on agriculture; however, early water-powered industries developed in the 18th century at the falls on the Sudbury River. With the opening

of the railroad through South Framingham in 1834, significant industrial development occurred there until the mid-20th century. Framingham now has over 70,000 residents, with a diverse mix of areas that include residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and horticultural land, as well as natural open spaces. As a major employment center, the daytime population is far higher than the number of residents.

B2. Historic Framingham Centers

Framingham has four (4) historic centers of activity: Saxonville village; Framingham Centre; South Framingham (also known as Downtown); and Nobscot Village. These areas developed at different times, primarily due to changes in transportation modes and routes. In addition, smaller villages have developed along secondary roads.

Saxonville

The first urban center to be settled in the mid-17th century was Saxonville, due to its close proximity to the Sudbury River. A succession of mills was built at the falls on the river, which influenced the growth of the surrounding area. The most dramatic changes occurred after Michael Simpson bought the mill complex in 1858 and began manufacturing carpets. The Roxbury Carpet Company was a highly successful business, and Saxonville shared in its prosperity. Simpson owned a considerable amount of land surrounding the village, which he landscaped extensively, building scenic drives, overlooks, and rustic bridges to islands in Wildwood Pond, a manufactured pond off Mill Pond. Simpson's Park was noted for its fine zoo and picnic grounds. The former park and the now-covered pond are the site of the Pinefield Shopping Center.

Post-World War II subdivisions now surround the village of Saxonville, and the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) cuts through what was previously Simpson Garden Park. The Danforth Street Playground on a hillside above the river and the athletic fields of Framingham High School are all that remain of the Simpson Garden Park.

Framingham Centre

Framingham Centre was established when a new meetinghouse was constructed in 1735 on a knoll overlooking the Sudbury River at the intersection of the river and the main route from Boston (now Route 30). The Main Street Burial Ground is what remains of the first meetinghouse. In 1834, a new town hall, today known as Village Hall, was built on town-owned land at the Centre Common. Although it served as the seat of religious and civic life in Framingham, the character of Framingham Centre remained rural until the Framingham-Worcester stagecoach turnpike, built in 1806, transformed it into a center of business activity.

Being halfway between Boston and Worcester (i.e., 20 miles or one day's walk), Framingham was chosen as a repair station and a place for the changing of horses. The end of the stagecoach era and the establishment of a major railroad junction in South Framingham caused a decline in public activity at Framingham Centre. However, the area retained its Federal-era character of large homes and public buildings surrounding a common into the mid-20th century.

The Framingham Normal School, founded in 1839 in Lexington as the first teachers' college in the nation, has evolved into Framingham State University (FSU). The school continues to serve as a cultural center for the community, overlooking Framingham Centre from Bare Hill.

The transformation of Worcester Road (Route 9) into a four-lane limited-access highway in 1963 bisected Framingham Centre and essentially destroyed its 19th-century commercial center. The area northwest of Framingham Centre along Grove Street still retains an open quality due to the Edgell Grove Cemetery. Constructed on land donated by the Edgell family and laid out as a garden cemetery by the architect of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Edgell Grove is one of the best-preserved examples of a garden cemetery, despite being bisected by the Massachusetts Turnpike in the 1950s. The Barbara Gray soccer fields (Victory Fields) on Auburn Street, the Sudbury River canoe landing at Central Street, and Centre Common are examples of public access open space in Framingham Centre.

South, or Downtown, Framingham

South Framingham (Central Business (CB) District) became the new growth center with the opening of the railroad in 1834. New industries located near the rail line, a new commercial core grew up around the railroad station, and new housing spread north and south of the tracks. The railroad also spurred the development of pleasure parks at Mount Wayte (then known as Lakeview) for Chautauqua lecture programs, camp meetings, and preaching, as well as at Harmony Grove on the east shore of Farm Pond. Large numbers of people would come by train for daily excursions and meetings at each. Although Harmony Grove, located between Downtown Framingham and Farm Pond, has been developed with railroad yards and a mix of urban uses, a former estate on the west side of Farm Pond remains open space available for public use. The former Cushing Hospital, a facility for recovery and rehabilitation of World War II veterans, has been transformed into open space and recreation purposes. This also led to the restoration of Cushing Chapel, a 1943 chapel now available for public events.

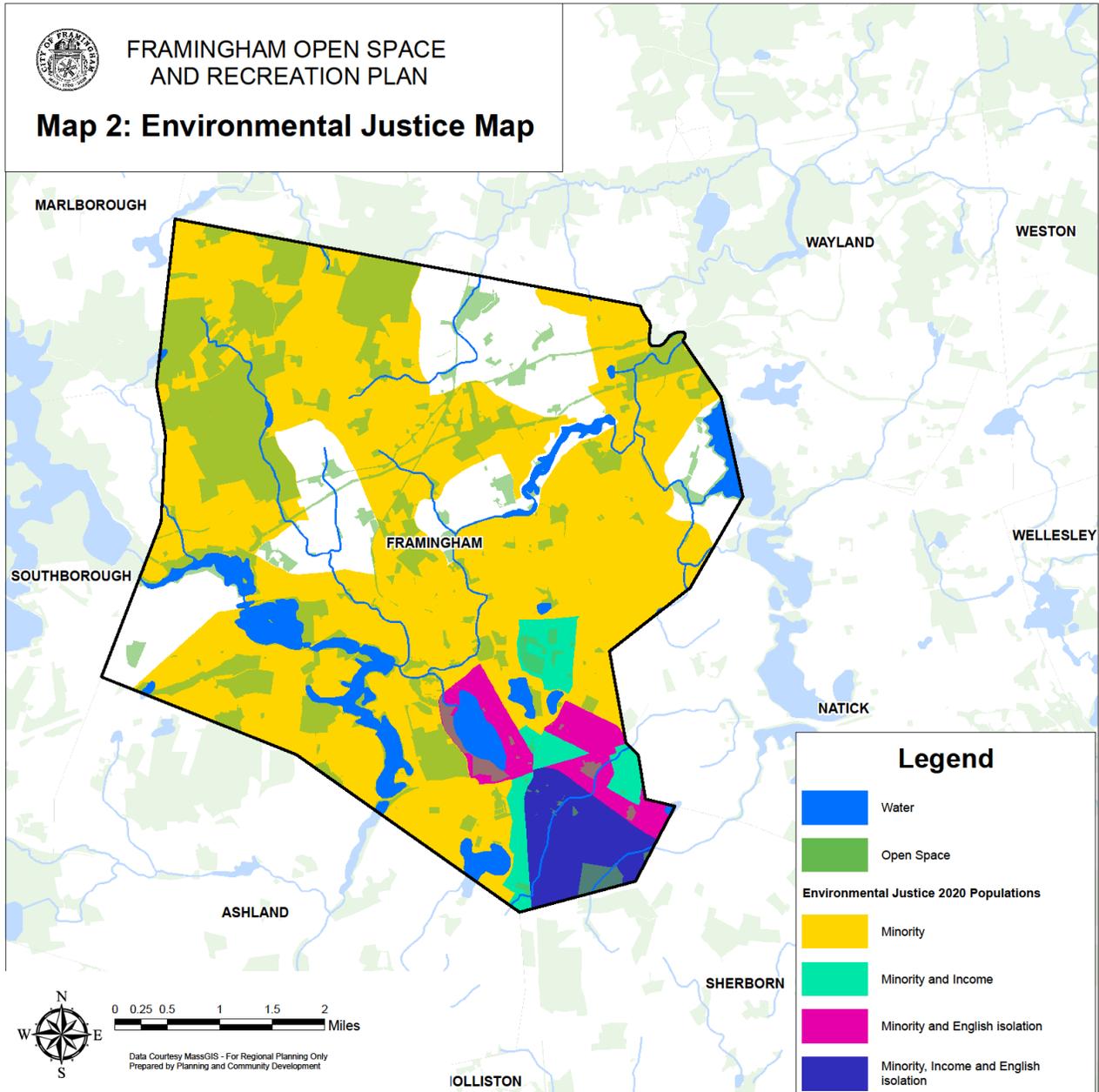
The Musterfield area, situated just north of Downtown Framingham, was acquired by the Commonwealth in 1875 and has been utilized since then as a militia encampment and subsequently as training grounds. The Musterfield was the encampment for soldiers preparing to ship out from the port of Boston, but it was also the site of one of the first military airfields in the country. While the area still includes a National Guard base, much of it was redeveloped in the late 20th century into public housing and housing for veterans.

Currently, Downtown Framingham serves as the governmental center of the City, housing important public buildings such as the Memorial Building (City Hall), the Callahan Center, the central library, and significant commercial buildings, including the Hemenway Block and the Arcade. Throughout the 20th century, the Dennison Manufacturing Company operated a paper products business here; the cluster of buildings has been redeveloped and is known as the Dennison Triangle.

Nobscot

Nobscot, in the northwest corner of the City, was initially known as Brackett's Corner and, in the late 19th century, known as New Boston. While its historic commercial structures have been lost to later development, the surrounding area features many 17th- and 18th-century farmhouses along the winding old roads. Nobscot today consists of a vacant shopping center, the new Christa McAuliffe Library, and several small commercial structures, all located at the intersection of two roadways surrounded by new subdivisions and apartments.

C. Population Characteristics



Framingham is a diverse and growing community. The most recent census data available (ACS 2019-2023) indicates that Framingham’s population is 72,013. There are over 28,416 housing units in the community, with 54.8% of them owner-occupied.

Approximately 30.5% of households (8,415) have one or more children under 18, and 22.2% of the population is under 18. There are also over 8,098 households with residents aged 65+ -- approximately 29.4% of the total households, and 15.8% of the population is over 65.

In the past decade, the population has become increasingly more diverse. The breakdown of race in Framingham looks like this:

Race and Ethnicity	2010	%	2015-2019	%	2019-2023	%
White Alone	49,122	71.9%	47,339	65.4%	37,210	51.7
Black Alone	3,993	5.8%	5,053	7.0%	4,464	6.2
American Indian Alone	205	0.3%	225	0.3%	56	0.1
Asian Alone	4,333	6.3%	6,819	9.4%	5193	7.2
Pacific Islander Alone	47	0.1%	52	0.1%	32	0.0
Some Other Race Alone	7,448	10.9%	8,796	12.2%	4,509	6.3
Two or More Races	3,170	4.6%	4,104	5.7%	7,060	9.8
Hispanic Origin	9,161	13.4%	12,559	17.3%	1,3489	18.7

It is interesting to note that there is a large Brazilian population in Framingham, who, although considered immigrants, are nonetheless more likely to identify as white (or, less often, as black). While they come from South America, they are not “Hispanic” as they speak Portuguese, not Spanish.

The median household income is \$98,179, which is lower than the state level (\$101,341) but higher than the national level (\$78,538). Nevertheless, 11% of the population still lives at or below the poverty level.

D. Growth and Development Patterns

D1. Patterns and Trends

Framingham is a diverse community comprising a variety of urban, suburban, and rural development types, as well as open spaces offering active and passive recreational opportunities, and forest and agricultural lands. Framingham’s topography varies throughout the community, encompassing wetlands, reservoirs, lakes, ponds, hills, ravines, and other unique geographical features.

Framingham’s development patterns have been unique due to the variety of transportation nodes that exist throughout the City, including the long-standing presence of rail, highways, and several

major arterial roadways established as commercial corridors. Residential neighborhoods are easily accessible via these highways. The community has also been shaped by substantial wetlands, aqueducts, reservoirs, and other water bodies that have restricted the location and type of development.

The Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) offers two exits for users: Exit 13 on the east side of Framingham and Exit 12 on the west side of Framingham. These exits have contributed to the development of dense suburban shopping and office centers, centered around the triangle formed by Route 9 (Worcester Road), Route 30 (Cochituate Road), and Speen Street (the “Golden Triangle”), as well as the Technology Park and the 9/90 Corporate Center. The rail lines have primarily contributed to Framingham’s current development pattern, providing new opportunities for a changing economy. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority commuter rail (Boston-Worcester line), in addition to numerous freight carriers, has provided ongoing alternative opportunities for the movement and transportation of people and goods.

The City can be generally divided into four quadrants, each containing various types of land uses that have been impacted not only by zoning districts but also by challenges in topography, waterbodies, and access to infrastructure.

- The **northwest quadrant**, which is predominantly comprised of parcels with a minimum lot size requirement of one acre, is considered by its residents as rural. Additionally, immediately north of Interstate 90 are two of Framingham’s major office parks, including the Technology Park and the 9/90 Corporate Center. The northwest quadrant is home to large working farms and open spaces, in addition to Callahan State Park, Wayside Forest, and the Snow property. Housing within this area is typically historic or new and highly dispersed; the streets are predominantly scenic in nature; and the area contains varying topography (hills, wetlands, ponds, ravines), which makes development a challenge. Many of the City’s few remaining large wooded lots are located here. Nobscot village is at the eastern edge of the northwest quadrant.
- The **northeast quadrant** is comprised of varied residential neighborhoods, generally with lots of 8,000 to 20,000 s.f., in addition to manufacturing and commercial lands. This area is anchored by the historic village of Saxonville, established in the 18th century around a fall in the Sudbury River. The northeast quadrant encompasses Framingham’s largest post-World War II housing developments and the north side of the Golden Triangle—an area renowned for its regional shopping amenities. The northeast quadrant has a community beach on Lake Cochituate, 88 acres of City-owned open space in “the Oxbow”, the Sudbury River, and other natural features. With relatively flat topography and access to municipal infrastructure, this area has been almost completely developed since World War II.

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- The **southwest quadrant** comprises residential lots, generally ranging from 5,000 square feet to one acre, in addition to commercial areas along Route 9 (Worcester Road) and Route 135 (Waverly Street). It is very diverse, as successive waves of development have occurred since the area was first settled around 1693 by families fleeing the Salem Witch Trials. Many of Framingham's waterbodies are located within this area, thus restricting development opportunities. The City of Boston developed these reservoirs in the late 19th century as a source of drinking water, and they are still owned by the Commonwealth. Open space and recreation lands within this area include the Framingham Country Club, the Sons of Mary property, Macomber Estate, Cedar Woods, Farm Pond Park, and Cushing Park.
 - The **southeast quadrant** contains Framingham's largest industrial areas, 8,000-square-foot (and smaller) residential lots, manufacturing, small business, and commercial uses, in addition to the Dennison Triangle and the Central Business District. The land uses within this area were predominantly shaped by access to the railroad and successive manufacturing uses of complexes like the Dennison Triangle and the Bancroft Building. Redevelopment within the Central Business District has recently increased following changes to the zoning code that promote transit-oriented development; however, the variable high-water table often presents development challenges, combined with financial constraints, that can result in projects being deemed unfeasible for developers.

D2. Infrastructure

Framingham historically served as a water supply for Boston. Cochituate, then Farm Pond, and finally the reservoirs were flooded to supply Boston, and Framingham had access to water systems by extension. This led to increased commercial and industrial development in Framingham, relative to its surrounding towns. Today, the city's infrastructure continues to play a crucial role in its growth. The Framingham Relief Sewer is a large pump in the southeast. Easy access to sewage treatment encourages development in South Framingham, while in the North, barriers such as the aqueducts and Mass Pike make it difficult to connect to sewer systems. The elevation differential also presents a challenge, as systems must fight against gravity (being pumped up to four separate times) to reach the treatment facility. As a result, Northwest Framingham requires septic systems; some areas don't even have access to public water systems, relying instead on well-water usage. This region has less industry and zones with larger parcels (a minimum of 1 acre). In 2009, the Massachusetts Life Science Center awarded Framingham a \$7.7 million grant for Phase II of a wastewater management project, which involved constructing a Genzyme biomanufacturing facility in the Framingham Technology Park. This expanded both sewage access and development to the west of Framingham.

Framingham's transportation systems led to its early development as a commercial hub in the MetroWest region. The commuter rail and Mass Pike continue to be a driving force in its

development. Framingham has made a recent effort to increase bicycle and pedestrian access to the commuter rail, which will lead to future path and trail development.

Both the commuter rail and the Massachusetts Turnpike (also known as the Mass Pike) go through Framingham, with the Pike having two exits and a commercial center. Commuters passing through to Boston and residents coming for commercial purposes to Framingham create a high-traffic area and funnel effect on the Massachusetts Pike. Almost half of all the economic development of MetroWest is within Framingham’s city limits, especially along the Pike and the corridor of the Pike that goes to Deer Island (where Boston sewage is processed). Both the Pike and the rail station have encouraged commercial and economic development in Framingham, and they will continue to do so.

Framingham’s Current Stormwater System

Approximately one-third of the drainage system is over 50 years old. Approximately 10 percent of the system dates back to before 1925 and is constructed using clay pipes and stones, with very little mortar to prevent infiltration (Table 4-10).

Table 4-10. City of Framingham Drainage System Components		
Drainage Component	Total Quantity	Notes
Pipe	200 mi (or 1,050,000 ft)	4,100 pipelines built before 1955
Catch Basins	8,200	2,500 catch basins built before 1955
Manholes	2,200	1,200 manholes built before 1955
Outfalls	500+	
Culverts	600+	

Stormwater infrastructure requirements for Framingham include:

- Several areas require an increase in capacity (even though speedy conveyance of stormwater is no longer the single goal of the system);
- Improvements to infrastructure and maintenance;
- A comprehensive maintenance program for the drainage system;
- Management of the Saxonville Levee; and
- Maintenance of its construction standards, including standards for materials and construction of the drainage system.

Stormwater Planning

Framingham has a comprehensive stormwater management plan to address these and other needs. The purpose of the Phase II NPDES program is to reduce pollutants in US water bodies from stormwater (or drainage) by addressing water quality (addressed in other sections of this report), erosion and sedimentation, and recharge. The Phase II program applies to municipalities with fewer

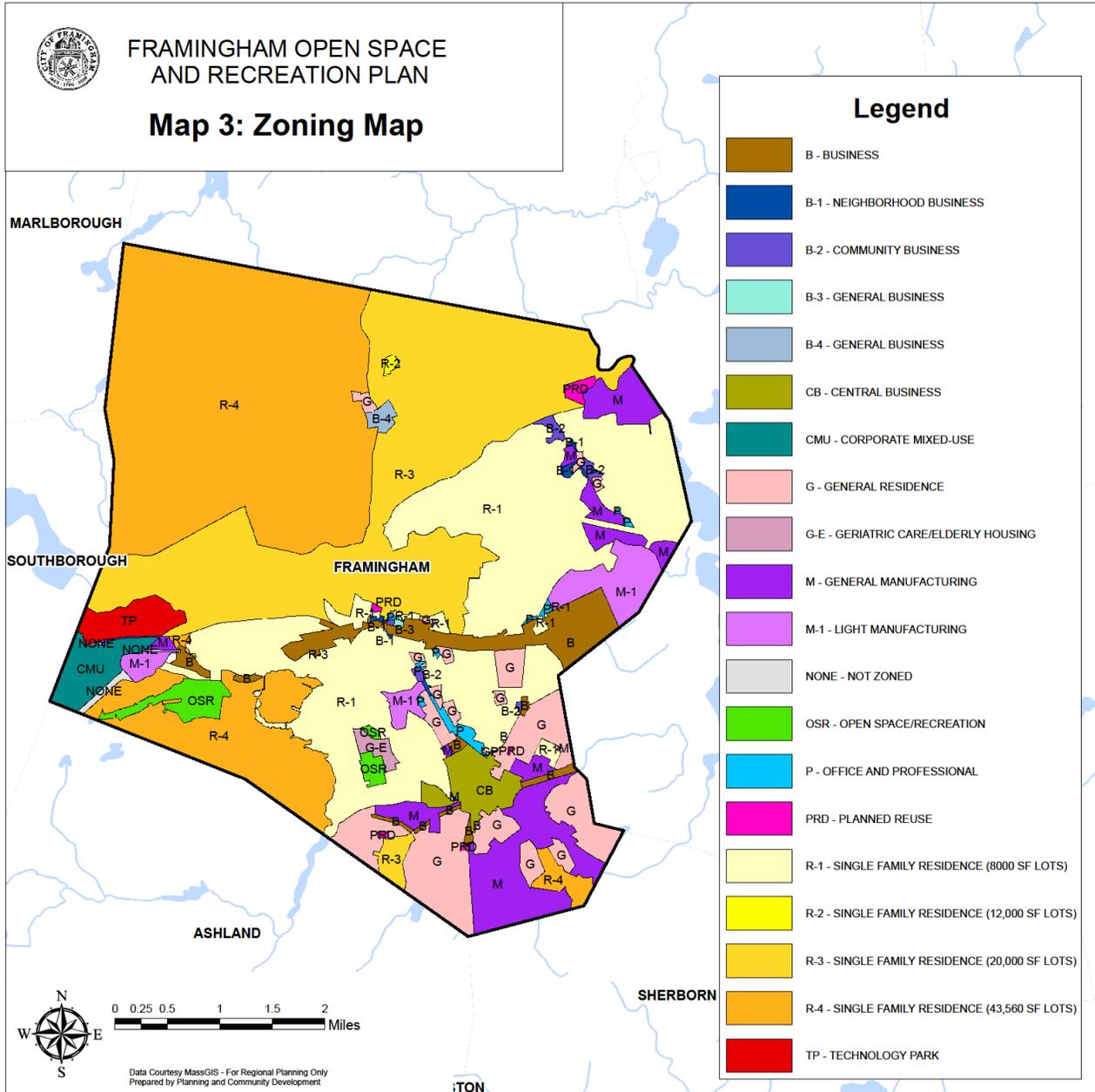
than 100,000 residents and other selected legal bodies [by contrast, the Phase I program applies to municipalities with populations over 100,000]. The City of Framingham's drainage system, also known as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), operates under such a permit. The federal regulation governing this permit is 40 CFR 122.34(b)(3), commonly referred to as the Stormwater Phase II MS4 Regulations.

Framingham plans that address stormwater issues include the Master Plan (updated in 2020), the Stormwater Management Plan (SMP), the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Multiple Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP), and the Municipal Vulnerabilities Plan (MVP).

Several regulatory frameworks actively address stormwater management:

- An Illicit Discharge Elimination Bylaw was passed in May 2008. It helps Framingham detect and address illicit discharges by instituting procedures for: (1) locating priority areas likely to have illicit discharges; (2) tracing the source of an illicit discharge; (3) removing the source of the discharge; and (4) evaluating and assessing.
- Wetland protection laws, bylaws, and regulations, implemented by the Conservation Commission, address erosion through the wetland permitting process, regulating pre-construction, during, and post-construction site characteristics.
- Subdivision rules and regulations, as well as zoning bylaws, now reference DEP's stormwater regulations, which incorporate LID requirements into construction and redevelopment projects.
- Framingham's land disturbance bylaw combines and strengthens three old bylaws that address earth removal, erosion control, and land clearing.

D3. Long Term Development Plans



To date, Framingham has continued to be successful in its ability to attract new development and reinvestment within the community. Since the last OSRP update in 2013, the City has experienced new development and redevelopment throughout Framingham, including the following:

Residential

- In 2015, after several years of visioning and planning, Town Meeting approved new zoning specifically for the Central Business (CB) District, which promoted Transportation Oriented

Development (TOD) and efforts to attract new residents and businesses to the downtown area. The City aims to target development and redevelopment in areas where existing infrastructure supports such growth. As a result of the CB District changes, Framingham has since permitted six major residential projects that are completed:

- 266 Waverly Street, 270 units;
- 55 (75) Concord Street, 192 units;
- 68 & 74 South Street, 25 units;
- 59 Fountain Street, 256 units;
- 54 Union Avenue, 75 units; and
- 80 Kendall Street, 64 units.

Just outside the CB District, the former Mt. Wayte Shopping Plaza has been developed with 210 units of residential housing and a 60-seat restaurant.

- In 2016 and 2018, the City lost two large (mostly) undeveloped parcels to residential development: 518 Pleasant Street (former Marist Brothers facility) has been redeveloped as a 60-unit over-55 housing project combined with an assisted living facility. 175 Millwood Street (formerly the 14-hole Millwood Golf Course) will be redeveloped into a 129-unit housing project for residents aged 62 and above. Each project has been required to preserve 30 percent of the land as open space.
- Several small subdivisions, located throughout the community, have also been developed, comprising six to ten single-family house lots.
- Since the adoption of the Neighborhood Cluster Development By-Law, the City has permitted two projects, both located on Clarks Hill, for a total of 37 units.
- A Planned Unit Development, approved in 2013 with 353 units, has been completed since the last OSRP on Riverpath Drive near Saxonville.
- 1060 Grove Street (“Paradise Valley”) is currently in the permitting process with a proposal of 60 units of active adult housing.

Manufacturing

- Reuse of the existing Dennison Triangle site has proceeded slowly. But recently, this area has been able to attract new business investment, including a brew pub, Jack’s Abby, a non-profit social services organization, Southern Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), and numerous small research and development facilities within the original portion of the complex (300 Howard Street, 1 Grant Street, and 4 Bishop Street).

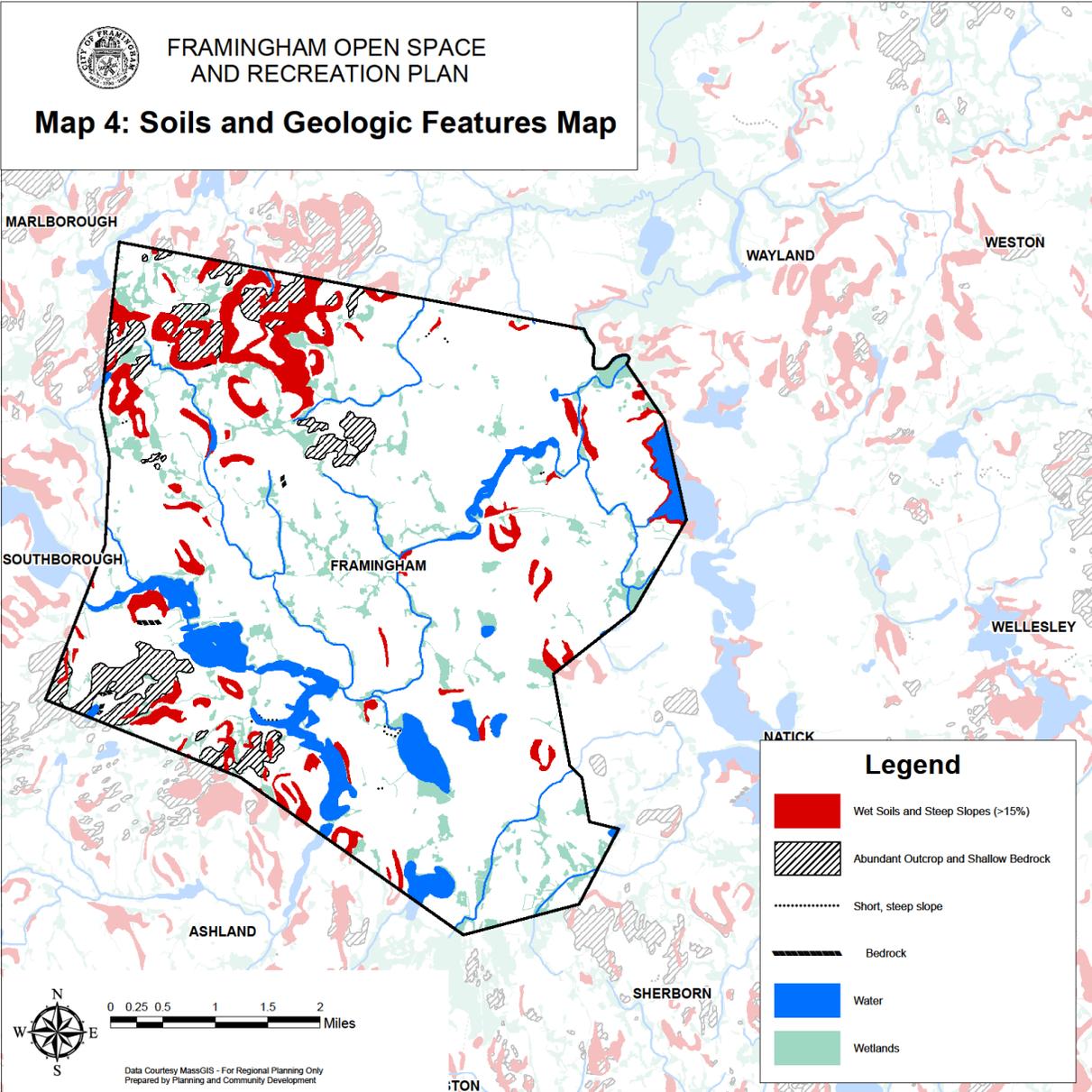
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- At the Technology Park, both Sanofi (formerly Genzyme) and Bose have been reinvesting in their respective properties, including a solar field at Bose and renovations to off-street parking lots at Sanofi. One of the most significant developments in the Technology Park is the recent redevelopment of the former MetroWest Daily News building into research and development space.

Commercial

- Numerous commercial redevelopments have occurred along Old Connecticut Path (Lifetime Fitness at the former Sealtest Plant), Cochituate Road (Avidia Bank, Convenient MD Urgent Care Center, Style Salon), and scattered along Worcester Road. One Framingham Centre has been redeveloped to revitalize a formerly blighted property and now features IHOP and several small specialty businesses, including Volturmo, a restaurant.
- The recent approval of adult-use marijuana by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2017 has introduced a new commercial sector to Framingham. The adult use marijuana industry allows for retail sales within a designated overlay district (adopted by the City in 2018), and manufacturing, cultivation, and processing on manufacturing lands and lands presently engaged in agricultural activities. The City has extended six Host Community Agreements (HCAs) for marijuana retail establishments within the Marijuana Retail Establishment (MRE) Overlay District, in addition to three cultivation/manufacturing/processing facilities, one of which is slated for development at Eastleigh Farm, a large open space parcel in northwest Framingham.

Chapter 4: Environmental Inventory and Analysis

A. Geology, Soils, and Topography



A1. Overview of the Geology, Soils, and Topography

Geology

In the City of Framingham (the City), as throughout New England, most landforms were created by glaciation. At the end of the last Ice Age (approximately 10,000 years ago), glaciers retreated. Large lakes were formed, including what is known geologically as Glacial Lake Sudbury, which extended from Framingham to Concord (about four (4) miles wide and twenty (20) miles long). This glacial lake spilled over into the Charles River at three (3) different places and times. The rivers began to cut their way through the glacial till, assuming their present character with the complete retreat of the ice sheet.

Framingham is part of a broad lowland belt in Eastern Massachusetts where glacial soil deposits cover much of the bedrock. A thin veneer of till (a mixture of pebbles, cobbles, and boulders deposited by melting glaciers and embedded in a mix of sand, silt, and clay) overlays much of the bedrock and is most extensive in the hills in the western half of the City. In the lower elevations of the western half, glacial streams deposited sandy gravel soils. Drumlins (small, rounded hills formed by deposits of till) are found in various parts of the City.

Soils

Most of Framingham's soil is composed of deposits left when Glacial Lake Sudbury covered the eastern part of Framingham. The landforms created by the melting glacier are gently sloping deltas or flat-lying lake-bottom deposits. The delta soils are generally coarse gravel overlying finer-textured sands. Lake bottom deposits found in the southeast corner of Framingham are made up of fine sand.

Post-glacial soil deposits include alluvium (unstratified silt, sand, and gravel) and swamp deposits. Alluvium is found in the Sudbury River floodplain and is generally considered to be suitable for agriculture. The most common types of soils in the Sudbury River area are found in meadows consisting of muck and peat, which are associated with a high water table. The Hinckley soil types, derived from granite rocks, drain excessively and are low crop-producing soils. The Merrimac fine sandy loam is free from stones and gravel, easy to cultivate, and desirable for building. Large deposits of Ondawa fine sandy loam are located along the Sudbury River from the Saxonville Dam to the aqueduct. These deposits are close to the water level and are supplied with moisture even during dry seasons. Small swamps are found in poorly drained areas throughout Framingham and consist of peat and muck, along with some silt and sand (Hofman, Stein).

The most economically essential soil resources in Framingham are sand and gravel deposits, which have been mined in recent years from pits located in the northeast corner of the City. Swamp soils are useful as soil-enriching agents; however, Framingham's soils are not agriculturally productive overall.

Topography

The central section of the City is relatively flat with an elevation of about 200 feet above sea level and rises to an elevation of about 400 feet in the Northwest Quadrant. A combination of wetlands, steep slopes, and exposed bedrock characterizes this area. Throughout the remainder of the City, topographical levels range from a low of 114 feet above sea level at the surface of the Sudbury River below the Saxonville Dam, to a high of 602 feet at the top of Nobscot Hill.

A2. Effect on Development and Recreation

Bedrock Outcrops

Bedrock outcrops are present throughout the City, with several large clusters concentrated in the northwest. Septic tanks cannot be placed on bedrock outcrops due to the inadequate topsoil for proper leaching. Development in areas with outcrops would require costly sewer system connections, excavation, or blasting. There are areas in Framingham that have severe limitations for growth due to the depth to bedrock. Additionally, shallow depth to bedrock can result in a perched water table. Perched water tables create hydric conditions at the surface and can result in the development of Isolated Vegetated Wetlands (IVWs). The soil series associated with this constraint are 7B, 7C, and 7D (Carlton-Hollis-Rock outcrops); 8C and 8D (Hollis-Rock outcrop-Carlton complex); 17C (Narragansett-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex); and 265 (Charlton-Hollis-Urban land Complex, rocky).

Steep Slopes

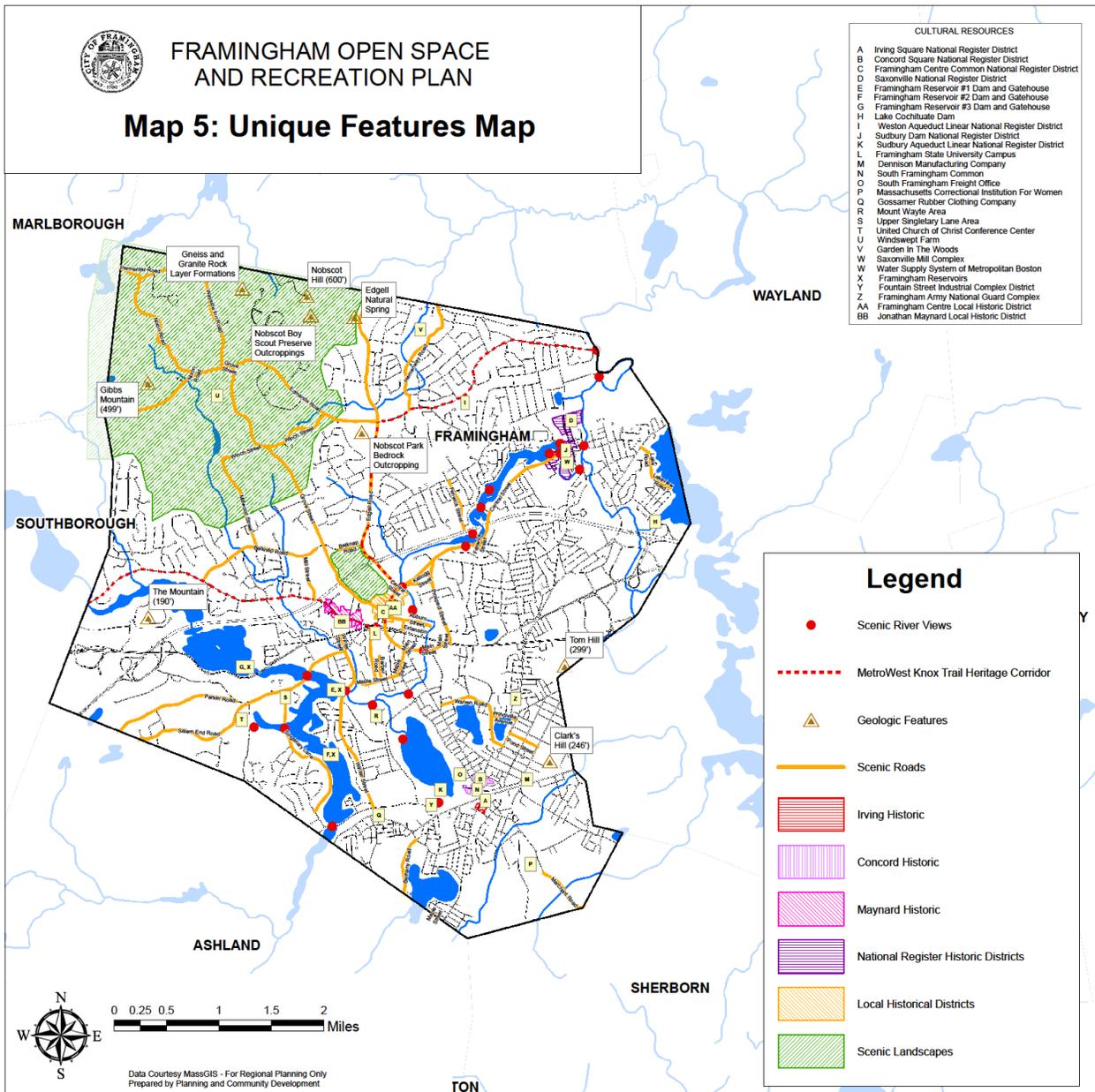
Steep slopes (gradients exceeding 15%) are a development constraint in several areas north of Edmands Road. The development costs associated with construction on steep slopes are extremely high. Necessary expenses for developing these slopes include grading, retaining walls, and vegetation to reduce runoff, erosion, lateral creep, and frost heaving. The soils associated with severe limitations on development due to steep slopes are those found in Charlton, Narragansett, Broadbrook, Canton, Paxton, Montauk, Hinckley, Quonset, and Bernardston.

Soils of low permeability, wetness, and/or tendency to flooding

These soil series include the following: Scituate, Ridgebury, Whitman, Scarboro, Pootatuck, Rippowam, Saco, Swansea muck, Freetown muck, Woodbridge, Limerick, Suncook, Winooski, Wareham, Occum, Raynham, Raypol, and Birdsall.

Areas with severe limitations on development are prime locations for acquiring open space. The development limitations of these areas would allow for lower acquisition costs, and preservation would limit the potential for costly maintenance of public services. Due to their diverse nature, these areas would also provide valuable ecological niches and recreational opportunities.

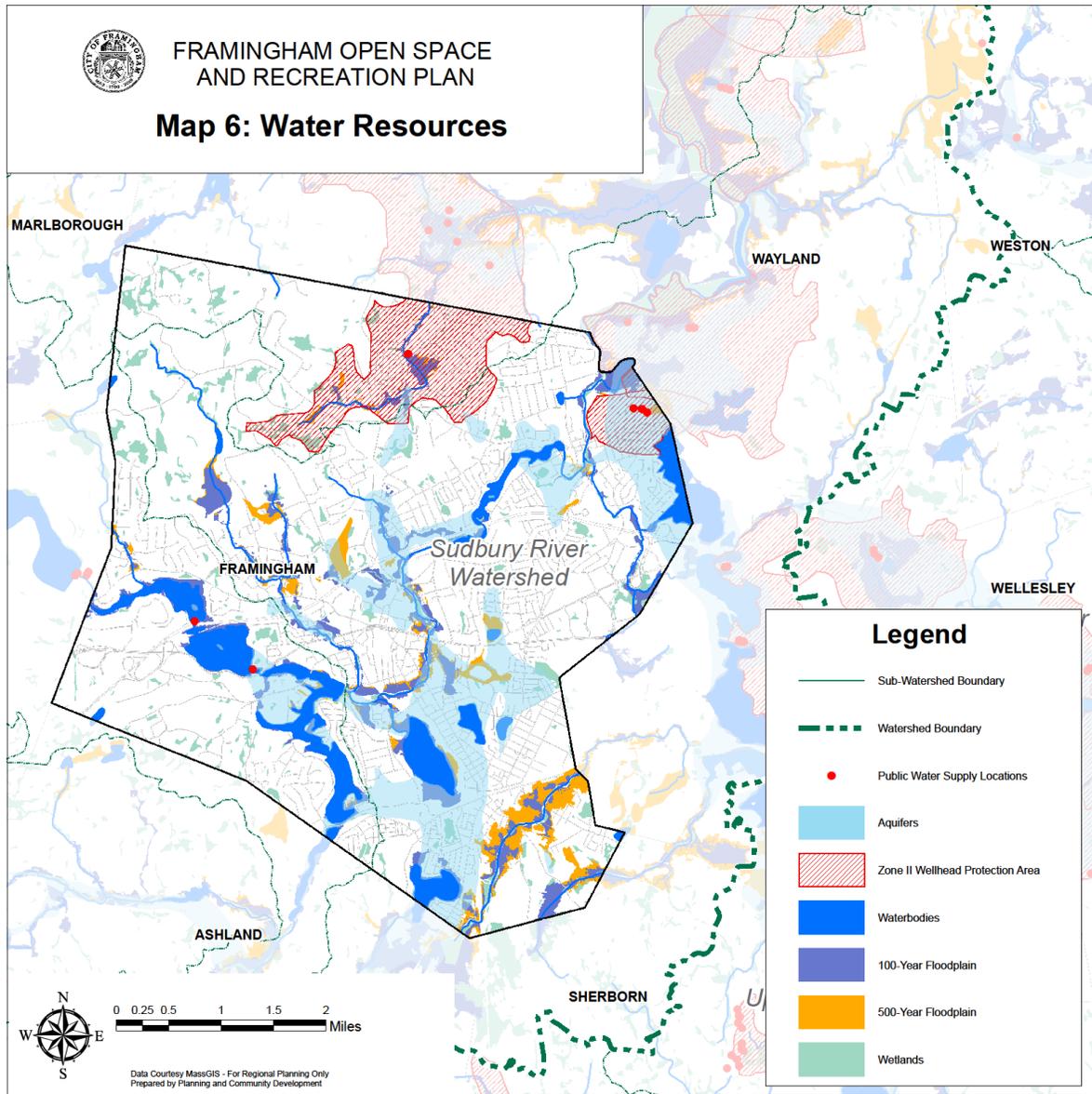
B. Landscape Character



A community's character is often defined by its natural features. Natural features provide both active and passive recreation opportunities for a community. Framingham is laid out over the broad Sudbury River valley and gently rolling terrain. The western portion of the City is low-density suburban development, rural farming land, and large tracts of parkland. It is there that numerous working and pleasure farms, as well as large tracts of state, municipal, and private protected open space, are found. It is, therefore, a patchwork of forests and fields. The threat to development in this northwest quadrant of Framingham is significant. The eastern half of the city is much more densely

developed, with single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods surrounding four (4) small commercial hubs: Downtown Framingham, Framingham Centre, Saxonville, and Nobscot. Two large transportation corridors run east-west and bisect the City. Worcester Rd. (State Route 9) is heavily commercially developed. The Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) has limited access and associated development. Additionally, Framingham is served by the Worcester line of the MBTA commuter rail service.

C. Water Resources



Over the past few years, the City has begun to integrate sustainability, resiliency and environmental

planning into its permitting processes and development guidelines. Additionally, there is a recognized need to manage and assess water resources holistically, acknowledging that drinking water supplies, wastewater treatment, and stormwater management are all interconnected.

C1. Watersheds

Framingham is located in the Concord Watershed. The Concord Watershed is comprised of three subbasins: Assabet, Concord, and Sudbury, collectively referred to as the SuAsCo Watershed, or simply the Concord Watershed. The City of Framingham is located in the center of the Sudbury subbasin.

Wild and Scenic River Designation

In 1999, a 29-mile segment of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord (SuAsCo) was designated by Congress to be added to the National Wild and Scenic River system. Designated rivers must possess at least one "outstanding remarkable resource value." The study found that the SuAsCo segment has five (5) of these qualities: ecological, recreational, historical and/or archaeological, scenic, and literary. 14.9 miles of the Sudbury River have been designated as scenic by the National Park Service. The section of the Sudbury River so designated begins in Framingham at the Danforth Street Bridge, includes the oxbow, and continues downstream (north) through Wayland, Sudbury, and Concord. The Wild and Scenic designation protects the rivers from "federally initiated, funded, or permitted actions that would harm the values for which the rivers were designated" (US Department of the Interior, Wild and Scenic Designation Q&A).

"OARS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to protect, improve, and preserve the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord Rivers, their tributaries and watersheds, for public recreation, water supply, and wildlife habitat. Established in 1986 as the Organization for the Assabet River by a group of concerned citizens, OAR expanded its mission to include the Sudbury and Concord Rivers in 2011, becoming OARS. Currently, the organization has approximately 900 individual and family memberships, an 11-member Board of Directors, and 3 full-time and part-time staff. Together with our volunteers and partners, OARS has made significant progress over the past 32 years towards achieving our mission.

OARS' three-pronged approach is to:

- Raise awareness of the rivers' natural beauty, habitat value, and physical importance to the watershed communities, governments, and other stakeholders, as well as bringing attention to the threats to the rivers' water and habitat quality;
- Collect data and advocate for additional information gathering in order to ensure that decisions affecting the rivers are based on scientific research; and

-
- Work collaboratively with local and state governmental officials, community members, and others toward solutions that will help the rivers achieve their “fishable and swimmable” state standard.
 - Awareness and Stewardship. OARS believes that stewardship grows out of increased public understanding of the causes of — and solutions to — the problems our rivers face. OARS offers a variety of opportunities to get involved, enjoy, and learn about the rivers.”
 - SuAsCo Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA)
 - Sudbury-Assabet-Concord Wild & Scenic River Stewardship Council

C2. Surface Water

Sudbury River and Major Tributaries

Overview of the Sudbury River in Framingham

Framingham is part of the Sudbury River Watershed. Approximately 7.6 miles of the Sudbury River flow through Framingham. The headwaters start at Cedar Swamp, a 1650-acre, primarily vegetated wetland system, located in Hopkinton and Westborough. The river flows east through Southborough and Ashland before entering Framingham from the southwest.

The Sudbury River in Framingham passes over a series of two (2) dams. Its tributary, Stony Brook, passes over a third dam. The dams that form the Reservoirs were constructed in the late 1800s to provide Boston and the metropolitan area with a public water supply. By the mid-1900s, the use of the Stearns Reservoir (Reservoir No. 1) and the Brackett Reservoir (Reservoir No. 2) system as a source of drinking water was discontinued due to the construction of the Quabbin Reservoir and the discovery of extensive pollution in the sediment of the Sudbury River. The thirty (30)-foot river channel broadens dramatically as it flows through two reservoirs in the southern portion of the City. The first is Brackett Reservoir (Reservoir No.2) and the second is Stearns Reservoir (Reservoir No. 1). These Reservoirs range from 200 to 800 feet wide. The Reservoirs are no longer designated as backup emergency drinking water supplies. Uncontaminated Stony Brook flows through the Foss Reservoir (Reservoir No. 3); therefore, the Foss Reservoir and the upstream Sudbury Reservoir are maintained as emergency backup water supplies.

The Sudbury River regains its narrower channel as it flows northeasterly past Route 9 and the Massachusetts Turnpike. The channel again widens considerably to a width of 700 feet in the area known as Mill Pond, located above the Saxonville Dam — a dam situated at the bend of the Sudbury River in the center of Saxonville. From an elevation of 146 feet above the Saxonville dam, the Sudbury River falls to 114 feet as it winds north to the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Wayland and Sudbury.

Sudbury River Tributaries

Major tributaries that flow into the Sudbury River in Framingham are:

- Stony Brook, which flows into Reservoir 3 (Foss Reservoir), then flows to Reservoir 1 (Stearns Reservoir);
- Eames Brook, which drains Farm Pond, flows into the Sudbury River just below the Stearns Reservoir dam at the Mount Wayte neighborhood;
- Cochituate Brook, which drains Lake Cochituate, flows into the Sudbury River below the Concord Street (Route 126) bridge;
- Dunsdell Brook, which flows into the Sudbury River near the Massachusetts Turnpike, and;
- Baiting Brook, which flows into the Sudbury River just below the Reservoir outflow.

Other Major Streams in Framingham include:

- Hop Brook, which flows north into Sudbury and eventually into the Sudbury River; and
- Beaver Dam Brook, which flows from Waushakum Pond through southeast Framingham, into Natick, and thence into Lake Cochituate.

Water Quality of the Sudbury River and Major Tributaries in Framingham

The Aquatic Life Use is assessed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as “support” status for this segment of the Sudbury River based primarily on the benthic macroinvertebrate, water quality, and fish community data. The use is identified with an “alert” status, however, because of slightly elevated total phosphorus concentrations. Additionally, the lower portion of this segment is recognized as having an “alert” status due to mercury contamination from the Nyanza Superfund Site in Ashland.

Based on Division of Water Management (DWM) data that found elevated concentrations of mercury in edible fish tissue, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) issued site- site-specific fish consumption advisory that the general public should not consume any fish from the Sudbury River from Ashland to the confluence with the Assabet and Concord rivers, including Framingham Reservoirs #1 and 2. DWM conducted dry weather fecal coliform and E. coli bacteria sampling at Winter Street in Framingham (Station SU04) in July and September 2001. Four (4) of the ten (10) samples were elevated during both wet and dry weather conditions. (See the end of this chapter for further discussion of water quality in Framingham.)

Floodplains

Along the Sudbury River and many of its major tributaries are areas that are periodically inundated, known as floodplains. These areas may be vegetated with woody vegetation or only herbaceous vegetation. They provide flood storage capacity and serve as a unique habitat.

Ponds and Lakes

In addition to the Sudbury Reservoirs, Framingham has the following eight major ponds and lakes (Table 4-1). The five (5) listed with an asterisk and identified on Map 10 are recognized as “Great Ponds” by the State. Any pond or lake that contains more than 10 acres in its natural state is a “Great Pond” and requires public access. Great Ponds are also within the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Chapter 91 permitting program. Projects such as docks, stairs, and dredging require a Chapter 91 permit through the State.

Table 4-1. Ponds and Lakes in Framingham

<u>Pond Name</u>	<u>Ac.</u>	<u>Public Access?</u>	<u>Public Uses</u>	<u>Abutter Uses</u>
<u>Farm Pond Big*</u>	<u>124</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Boating, fishing</u>	<u>n.a.</u>
<u>Farm Pond Little</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Fishing</u>	<u>n.a.</u>
<u>Gleason Pond*</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Fishing</u>	<u>Boating, fishing</u>
<u>Lake Cochituate*</u> <u>(North Pond)</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Boating, swimming, fishing</u>	<u>n.a.</u>
<u>Learned Pond*</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Swimming</u>	<u>Boating</u>
<u>Mohawk Pond</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Fishing</u>	<u>n.a.</u>
<u>Norton Pond</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Fishing</u>	<u>Boating, fishing</u>
<u>Sucker Pond</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>none</u>	<u>none</u>
<u>Waushakum Pond*</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Boating, swimming, fishing</u>	<u>Boating, swimming, fishing</u>

Farm Pond (Big and Little) * together are recognized by the State as a Great Pond. They are located on the south side of the City, paralleling Dudley Road and Franklin Street. Farm Pond is divided by a dike that carries an MWRA (Massachusetts Water Resources Authority) aqueduct. Big and Little Farm Ponds are approximately 124 and 23 acres in size, respectively. They were once used to supply the City's drinking water. Both water bodies are fed by numerous municipal storm drain systems as well as groundwater recharge and surface water runoff. The only outlet is Eames Brook, located at the northern end of Big Farm Pond. Eames Brook drains directly into the Sudbury River. A City-owned park is situated on the eastern shoreline and provides boat and fishing access to the pond.

Gleason Pond* is approximately 12 acres and is located at the intersection of Concord Street and Prindiville Avenue. The State recognizes it as a Great Pond. The shoreline has moderate development, consisting of single-family homes along the northern, western, and southern shorelines.

Lake Cochituate* is a 614-acre lake divided into three (3) major basins or ponds, which are connected by navigable culverts. The State recognizes it as a Great Pond. The 195-acre North Basin is the only basin that is partially within the City of Framingham and on the border with Wayland. It has a maximum depth of 69 feet (in Wayland) with transparency of five (5) to seven (7) feet. The bottom is predominantly muck, but there are considerable areas of sand in the shallows at the southern end. Aquatic vegetation is typical in the shadows. Lake Cochituate was a reservoir that supplied water via a 14-mile (23 km) aqueduct to the City of Boston from 1848 until 1951, when the Wachusett and Quabbin Reservoirs replaced it. Lake Cochituate was the first central water supply system for the City.

Learned Pond* is 34 acres with a maximum depth of 13 feet. The State recognizes it as a Great Pond. It is located in a semi-urban area between Union Ave and Warren Road. The pond receives stormwater runoff from most of the surrounding streets. There are no natural inlets or outlets. The City Beach is located on the eastern shore.

Mohawk Pond, located south of Mohawk Drive, is roughly 2 acres with an estimated depth of 4 feet. Most of the pond is bordered by wetlands and woods with a single house along the northern edge. The pond is fed by a small, unnamed stream that drains a wetland in Callahan State Park. The only outlet is a concrete weir on the south side of the pond, which empties into a tributary to Hop Brook.

Norton Pond is a small 5-acre pond located in the northern portion of Framingham. It is surrounded on three sides by single-family homes, and stormwater runoff comes into the pond from the north. Water from the southeastern outlet of the ponds creates Norton Pond Brook, which flows downhill and empties into the Sudbury River.

Sucker Pond is a small 6-acre pond (made of two separate basins), located in central Framingham. There is development around much of the pond, but the shoreline is well buffered by woodland.

Waushakum Pond* is an 82-acre, irregularly shaped glacial kettle pond on the border of Framingham and Ashland. It is recognized by the State as a Great Pond. The majority of Waushakum Pond is located in Framingham, but 80% of its drainage area is in Ashland. The pond has an unnamed inlet stream in its southeast corner. Its outlet is on the northeastern shore next to Hollis St. This outlet feeds a tributary of Beaver Dam Brook.

C3. Aquifer Recharge Areas

An aquifer is a geologic formation that can easily yield a significant amount of groundwater. As water is withdrawn from an aquifer, it is replenished by water that is carried from the surface through permeable materials. The aquifer's "recharge area" is an area on the surface of the land below which groundwater moves to replenish the aquifer. These areas must be protected from actions that may reduce the downward flow of water or contaminate groundwater supplies. Framingham has three large areas designated as Zone II aquifer recharge areas. The Sudbury Water District aquifer is located in the northern part of Framingham and extends into Sudbury. The Framingham Water Department (MWRA) is in the northeast corner of Framingham, on the border of Wayland. It lies near Lake Cochituate, one of Framingham's great lakes. The Wayland Water Department aquifer primarily lies within Wayland, but it also extends into northeastern Framingham, following the course of the Sudbury River.

C4. Flood Hazard Areas

Flood hazard areas are regions with a high risk of flooding, specifically those with a 1% annual chance of flooding. These are also known as 100-year flood zones. FEMA designates these areas using FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) and LOMR (Letters of Map Revision) data. In inland Framingham, floods are typically the result of extended or extreme precipitation or melting snowpack. Framingham also contains floodplains, areas with a tendency to periodic flooding. Often found near major tributaries, these floodplains provide water storage capacity and unique habitats for wildlife. The areas defined in Table 4-1b are high-flood potential areas, or those with a 1% chance of flooding per year.

Table 4-1b. Flood Hazard Areas

River	Limits of the flood area
Sudbury River	Entire Length
Reservoir No. 1 - North Branch	From Reservoir No 1 Dam to the Reservoir No. 3 Dam
Reservoir No. 3	From Reservoir No. 3 Dam to a point approximately 0.5 mile upstream of the Pleasant St. bridge.
Angelica Brook	From its confluence with Reservoir No. 3 to a point approximately 0.1 mile upstream of Angelica Dr.
Beaver Dam Brook	From a point approximately 180 feet downstream of Second St. to a point approximately 2.2 miles upstream
Cochituate Brook	From its confluence with the Sudbury River to the Cochituate Rail Trail bridge
Hop Brook	From a point approximately 0.25 miles downstream of the Colonial Dr. bridge to a point approximately 2.2 miles upstream.
Baiting Brook	From its confluence with Birch Meadow Brook to a point approximately 0.8 miles upstream.
Brook from Waushakum Pond	From its confluence with Beaver Dam Brook to a point approximately 0.8 miles upstream

East Outlet	From its confluence with the Sudbury River to its divergence from Baiting Brook
Birch Meadow Brook	From its confluence with East Outlet to approximately 90 feet upstream of the Weston Aqueduct

Additional areas with frequent flooding were identified in the updated MHMP plan by FIS, DPW, the Fire Department, and the Police Department. They are listed below:

- Lokerville Brook—Bishop Street Area
- Reservoir No. 3—Vallaincourt Drive, Westgate Road
- Farm Pond—Downtown, Park Street Area, including Beech Street and the Common
- Dunsdell Brook—Brook Street, Scott Drive, and McAdams Road
- Waushakum Pond—Berry Street and Gilbert Street
- Beaver Dam Brook—Waverly Street, Beaver Court, Beaver Street, Second Street, Morton Street,
- Herbert Streets and Taralli Terrace
- Sudbury River—Circle Drive, Trafton Road, Bare Hill Road, and Maple Street
- Sudbury River — Edgell Road
- Baiting Brook—Wayside Inn Road
- Angelica Brook— Lanewood Drive and lower Angelica Drive
- Sucker Brook—Walnut Street residences (not including the roadway)
- Hop Brook—Gregory Road, Sloane Drive, and Hemenway Road
- Cochituate Brook — Concord Street, Speen Street

C5. Wetlands (Regulation and Protection Regarding Wetland Resource Areas)

Wetland Resource Areas protected under the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, sec. 40) (the WPA) include:

- Wetlands (marshes, bogs, fens, swamps, wet meadows) that border on surface waters;
- Bank of ponds, lakes, streams, and rivers;
- Land under waterbodies and waterways;
- Riverfront Area (defined as land within 200’ of the mean annual high water mark of perennial streams);
- Land Subject to Flooding (Bordering and Isolated), and;
- Vernal Pools, provided they exist within one of the aforementioned resource areas.

Wetland Resource Areas protected under the Framingham Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Article V, sec. 18) (the Bylaw) include the aforementioned Wetland Resource Areas, with the addition of:

- Freshwater wetlands, whether or not they border surface waters, and;
- Potential and certified vernal pools, regardless of whether they are within another protected resource area or not.

Any activity within 100 feet of wetlands and 200 feet of perennial streams falls under the jurisdiction of the Framingham Conservation Commission under the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, sec. 40) (the WPA). Review of these activities is crucial to ensuring that development projects do not have adverse effects on any of the eight (8) interests assigned to Wetland Resource Areas under the WPA. These interests include flood control, prevention of storm damage, pollution prevention, protection of fisheries, shellfish protection, groundwater protection, protection of public or private water supplies, and wildlife habitat preservation. The Framingham Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Article V, Section 18) (the Bylaw) increases the Commission’s review area to 125 feet from wetland resource areas and adds stricter protection for vernal pools. The Bylaw assigns the same eight (8) interests to Wetland Resource Areas, with the addition of erosion and sediment control, water pollution prevention, passive recreation, aquaculture, and agriculture.

The protection of Wetland Resource Areas as defined in the WPA and the Bylaw is crucial to the preservation of functional, natural communities as well as the protection of human health and safety. Freshwater wetlands offer conditions for the growth of numerous types of hydrophytic vegetation that are able to uptake and purify water before it enters streams associated with water supplies. This vegetation also serves as a stabilizer that is important in attenuating the velocity of storm events. Freshwater wetlands, streams, and lakes/ponds also provide storage for floodwater that would otherwise negatively impact nearby human infrastructure. This storage allows water to slowly permeate back into the water table, which in turn maintains appropriate levels of clean groundwater to feed numerous public and private water supplies. Wetland Resource Areas also provide habitat for the typical fauna found in the area, as well as rare/endangered species. Snags, large rocks, fallen trees, and dense shrubs can provide cover for numerous types of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

Additionally, many species rely on vernal pools for a breeding period every Spring. The journey that these creatures make to vernal pools is referred to as “Big Night, generally occurring on the first warm Spring night with significant rainfall. See Section C for more information regarding vernal pools. Finally, resources such as lakes, ponds, and rivers provide opportunities for passive recreation. The enjoyment of these natural resources, especially by the youth population, is critical in educating humans about their value and the need for protection.

Vegetated Wetlands (See Section C for further details)

Wetlands and Marshes

Most of the vegetated wetlands in Framingham are swamps dominated by woody vegetation. Many border on surface waters, while others are isolated. Prominent wetland systems in Framingham include the Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) east of Walnut Street, the BVW east of Cedar Street, and the BVW east of Little Farms Road.

Vernal Pools

While not always the case, vernal pools often occur within vegetated wetlands. Most of Framingham's vernal pools are in depressions created by glacial action that took place thousands of years ago. Other pools form as a result of more recent events, such as stream channel migration and changes to the forested landscape due to past human influences (Colburn, 2004). Vernal pools provide a unique habitat for a variety of forest and wetland organisms, some of which depend on this habitat for their survival. The absence of fish within these pools is essential, as the breeding strategies of many amphibian species have evolved to the point of total reliance on these depressional wetlands (Colburn, 1997).

Eighteen (18) vernal pools have been certified in Framingham, though many others are known to exist. In fact, there are over 100 potential vernal pools in Framingham, according to the Massachusetts Aerial Photo Survey of Potential Vernal Pools (Spring 2001, Mass. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program). Vernal Pool certification through the State requires evidence that a vernal pool exists physically and that it contains the biological indicators that define it as a vernal pool. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has established specific criteria for certification of a vernal pool including: (1) land area that has a confined basin depression, (2) holds water for a minimum of two continuous months during spring and/or summer for most years, (3) be free of adult fish populations or dry up sometime during the year; and (4) provide essential breeding habitat for certain amphibians and/or food, shelter, migrating, and breeding habitat of other wildlife. Framingham affords a 125' No Disturb Zone from the boundary of a certified or potential vernal pool per the Bylaw.

C6. Water-Based Recreation and Access

The Sudbury River, lakes, and ponds in Framingham offer opportunities for canoeing, power boating, sailing, fishing, swimming, skating, and other water-based activities. The Park and Recreation Department manages three (3) City beaches at Waushakum Pond, Learned Pond, and Lake Cochituate. There is a public boat launch at the north end of Farm Pond for non-powered boats, and the canoe landings noted in Chapter 3, G.3. A public access canoe launch is available at the end of Little Farms Road. Lake Cochituate is the only nearby water body suitable for power boating. Currently, boating and shore fishing are not explicitly allowed on any of the three (3) MWRA Reservoirs in Framingham. Still, people fish in the Reservoirs from the Fountain Street Bridge, Winter Street Dam, and areas near Route 9 on the Massachusetts Turnpike.

D. Vegetation

D1. General Inventory Natural Communities

Though Framingham consists of over 26 Natural Communities as described in the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program's 'Classification of the Natural Communities of Massachusetts', only the eight most widespread natural communities are described below. Examples of Conservation Land with trails that allow visitors to observe these community types are included in each section.

White Pine – Oak Forest

Typically found on dry, moraine, or till soils, this is the largest natural community in Framingham and is expressed in wide distribution throughout the City. Often, the community has transitioned from a successional White Pine community to mixed oak forests. Trails through Wittenborg Woods offer visitors the opportunity to explore this unique community type. The canopy is dominated by white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and oak species (*Quercus rubra*, *Q. velutina*, and *Q. alba*), with regular but low occurrences of pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*), and black birch (*B. lenta*). Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) is frequently present as a shrubby tree. The pine-oak communities in Framingham typically display a prominent shrub layer of lowbush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*) and huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), and have a sparse herb layer of bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*), wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*), and pink lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*).

Associated wildlife includes white footed mice (*Peromyscus leucopus*), gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*), short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*), red-backed vole (*Clethrionomys gapperi*), and chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*). Birds that nest in white pine-oak forests include the Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*), Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*), Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), and Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). In most cases, these communities have interspersed woodland vernal pools.

Successional White Pine Forest

Often, these communities are found in areas where old fields have been left to grow or along the transitional edge between woodlands and fields. While this edge habitat is valuable to the Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), Yellow Warbler (*D. dominica*), Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), Black-capped Chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*), and Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*), it is particularly susceptible to the encroachment of non-native species such as buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.), and Asian bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculata*) and must be actively managed. Examples of this community type can be found near the fields of Mohawk Pond Natural Area.

Oak-Hemlock-White Pine Forest

This community is common on midslopes on rocky, shallow, well-drained soils with few nutrients. Examples of this community type can be found at Macomber Woods. It is often interspersed with the white pine-oak and mixed oak communities.

Associated plant species include: Oaks (*Quercus alba*, *Q. prinus*, *Q. rubra*), black birch (*Betula lenta*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), and Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). The relative proportions of the species vary significantly among sites. Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) sprouts are common, and the shrub layer is patchy and sparse, featuring witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), lowbush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*), and maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*). The herbaceous layer is also sparse and includes wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), wild oats (*Uvularia sessilifolia*), starflower (*Trientalis borealis*), and Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*).

Associated wildlife includes an extensive suite of neotropical migrant birds, such as warblers, the Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*), and the Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*). Common small mammals include masked shrew (*S. cinereus*), short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*), woodland jumping mouse (*Napaeozapus insignis*), white-footed mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*), and gray squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*), chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*), and red squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*). Amphibians include the ubiquitous Northern Redback Salamanders (*Plethodon cinereus*).

Oak-Hickory Forest

Several of Framingham's conservation areas feature woods dominated by a mixture of oak and hickory. Located along SVT's Henry's Hill and the Nobscot Scouts of America property, these areas are well-drained upper slopes with west and south-facing aspects. The canopy is dominated by one or several oaks (*Quercus rubra*, *Q. alba*, and *Q. velutina*) with hickories (*Carya ovata*, *C. tomentosa*, *C. glabra*, and *C. ovalis*) mixed in at lower densities. Other trees include white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), black birch (*Betula lenta*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). The sub canopy commonly includes hop hornbeam (*Ostrya americana*), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), shadbush (*Amelanchier arborea*), chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), and witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), and the diverse shrub layer includes maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), blueberries (*Vaccinium angustifolium*), beaked and American hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta* and *C. americana*), and gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*). The herbaceous layer is also richer than in many oak forests. It includes Hepatica (*Hepatica nobilis*), goldenrod (*Solidago bicolor*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), rattlesnake weed (*Hieracium venosum*), false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemosa*), and Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*).

The oak-hickory community is highly valuable to wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) and supports a mix of animal species, including short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*), red-backed vole (*Clethrionomys gapperi*), white footed mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*), and chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*). Birds that nest in these forests include Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*), Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), and Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*).

Cultural Grassland

Humans create cultural grasslands, which are typically maintained through annual mowing. Framingham has a few areas of cultural grassland. These areas have historically been open and are unsuitable for farming due to their dry, rocky, sandy, and low-nutrient soils. An example of a cultural grassland can be found at Callahan State Park and Henry's Hill. Grasslands are dominated by graminoids, including little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*), and poverty grass (*Danthonia spicata*). They typically include a mix of herbaceous species, such as goldenrods (*Solidago* and *Euthamia* spp.) and milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.).

Invasive exotic plants, especially cool-season grasses that form dense mats, pose a particular threat to this community and include sheep fescue (*Festuca ovina*), sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), velvetgrass (*Holcus lanatus*), bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), and others. European buckthorn also poses a significant threat to the cultural grasslands in Framingham.

Red Maple Swamp

Many of Framingham's wetlands are red maple swamps. The trail at Cedar Swamp off Mellon Street skirts the edge of this community type. These areas are characterized by acidic soils that are seasonally flooded by groundwater seepage or surface water flow. Red maple is the dominant canopy tree, but may associate with yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), and swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*). The shrub layer is often dense and well-developed with sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*), highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), northern arrow-wood (*Viburnum dentatum*), speckled alder (*Alnus incana*), and nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*). The herbaceous layer is variable, but cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), and wood fern (*Dryopteris carthusiana*) are often common. Herbaceous species include skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), false hellebore (*Veratrum viride*), spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*), swamp dewberry (*Rubus hispida*), marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), and the bugleweeds (*Lycopus* spp.).

Red maple swamps provide habitat for song sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*), northern cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), red-eyed vireos, and black-throated green warblers. Mammals that commonly

utilize these habitats include beavers, raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), mink (*Mustela vison*), and deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*).

Vernal pools in these habitats provide important breeding grounds for amphibians, and red maple swamps contain several rare plants and animals. The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and Framingham Wetlands Protection Bylaw limit common threats to these critical resource areas.

Deep Emergent Marsh

Framingham has areas of deep emergent marsh along the Sudbury River and adjacent to both its natural and manufactured ponds and low-grade streams. Deep, emergent marshes form in broad, flat areas with saturated, mucky mineral soils that are seasonally inundated and permanently saturated. Typically, a layer of well-decomposed organic matter is present at the surface, and standing or running water covers the area for much of the year. Deep emergent marshes are dominated by tall graminoids, such as cattail (*Typha latifolia*) and wool-grass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), along with tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*), beggar-ticks (*Bidens* spp.), marsh fern (*Thelypteris palustris*), and slender-leaved goldenrod (*Euthamia tenuifolia*). These marshes often transition into shallow emergent marshes, wet meadows, and shrub swamps.

These wetland communities provide critical habitat for waterfowl and are home to leopard, pickerel, green, and bull frogs, as well as red-spotted newts. Wood frogs use areas that are fish-free, and many rare plants and animals are associated with these communities. Bird species commonly found in marshes include common yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), tree swallow, swamp sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*), common grackle (*Quiscalus quicula*), and red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*). While the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and Wetlands Protection Bylaw limit common threats to these critical resource areas, they remain threatened by nutrient loading from adjacent lawns, roads, and septic systems, and the abundance of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) and phragmites (*Phragmites australis*).

Woodland Vernal Pool

As mentioned in the water resources section, Framingham's rolling topography makes for great vernal pool habitat. An estimated 100 vernal pools are thought to exist in the City. Visitors can observe this habitat at SVT's Cowassock Woods, located off Salem End Road, and Macomber Woods, situated on Badger Road. These small, shallow depressions often have hydric soils, are temporarily flooded, and provide critical breeding habitat for wood frogs (*Rana sylvatica*), spotted turtles, and two (2) local species of mole salamanders (*Ambystoma* spp.). Vernal pools also support a diverse invertebrate fauna, including fairy shrimp (*Eubranchipus* spp.), which complete their entire life cycle in vernal pools. Woodland vernal pools often have little or no vegetation, but they are ringed by upland trees or shrubs, such as sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*).

D2. Public Shade Trees

Framingham was designated a Tree City USA community 22 years ago by meeting four standards established by the Arbor Day Foundation. The City strictly follows the statutes outlined in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87: Public Shade Trees and has a designated Tree Warden to help abide by these regulations and maintain the community’s current public shade tree inventory.

The City is exploring the possibility of conducting a Comprehensive Shade Tree Inventory, documenting all trees located within the roadway right-of-way throughout the City. With this inventory and associated Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, the City can analyze the tree canopy percentage and benefits. According to 2005 land use data through the Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information (MassGIS), there are 5,018 acres of land where coniferous and deciduous tree canopy covers at least 50% of the land in Framingham.

In honor of Arbor Day 2014, the City planted approximately 30 trees with a 4-5-inch diameter along Edgell Road in Framingham’s Historic Centre with assistance from regional volunteers. These trees not only create a more welcoming visual corridor along Edgell Road, but they also help reduce stormwater runoff, decrease urban heat effects, clean the air by removing CO2 emissions, and provide habitat for wildlife, among other benefits.

D3. Wetland Vegetation

See Section D. Vegetation 1. General Inventory.

D4. Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants

Eight (8) species of vascular plants found or once found in Framingham are listed with the Mass. The Wildlife Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, listed wildlife in May 2013 as Endangered (E), Threatened (T), or of Special Concern (SC) under MESA (the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act) and/or the Federal Endangered Species List (Table 4-2). It is interesting to note, however, that several of these species have not been observed since the 1800s.

Table 4-2. Vascular Plants in Framingham that are Threatened, Endangered, or Rare				
Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	MESA Status	Most Recent Observation
Vascular Plant	<i>Sparganium natans</i>	Small Bur-reed	E	1890
Vascular Plant	<i>Dichanthelium dichotomum</i> <i>ssp. mattamuskeetense</i>	Mattamuskeet Rosette-grass	E	1892
Vascular Plant	<i>Aristida purpurascens</i>	Purple Needlegrass	T	1911
Vascular Plant	<i>Lipocarpha micrantha</i>	Dwarf Bulrush	T	1911
Vascular Plant	<i>Cyperus engelmannii</i>	Engelmann's Flat sedge	T	2019

Vascular Plant	<i>Nabalus serpentarius</i>	Lion's Foot	E	1909
Vascular Plant	<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>	Purple Milkweed	E	1885
Vascular Plant	<i>Celastrus scandens</i>	American Bittersweet	T	1912

D5. Sites having unique natural resources

Framingham Exemplary Habitats

Core and Supporting Habitats

In 2011, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) published 'BioMap2: Guiding Land Conservation for Biodiversity in Massachusetts', which identified:

- Core Habitats: the most viable habitat for rare plants, rare animals, and natural communities and;
- Critical Natural Landscapes: buffer areas around Core Habitats, large undeveloped patches of vegetation, and undeveloped watersheds.

(see also Section 4.F.4. Core Habitats and Critical Natural Landscapes and Table 4-9)

The Biomap2 report for Framingham was issued in 2012. Framingham has seven (7) areas of Core Habitat, including three (3) wetlands and four (4) aquatic core habitats. The City also contains nine (9) areas of Critical Natural Landscape, including one (1) landscape block, three (3) wetland core buffers, and four (4) aquatic core buffers. More information on BioMap2 is included in Section F: Scenic Resources and Unique Environments.

Priority Habitats (All Rare Plants and Animals)

According to NHESP, Framingham has three (3) areas of Priority Habitat of Rare Species. Priority Habitat is the known geographical extent of habitat for all state-listed rare species, both plants and animals, and is codified under MESA.

Estimated Habitat (Rare Wetlands Wildlife)

Framingham also has three (3) areas of Estimated Habitat of Rare Wildlife. The Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program has developed maps of the Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife. These maps show habitat that is based on documented occurrences of rare wetland wildlife within the last twenty-five (25) years. Section E. discusses further rare wildlife.

E. Wildlife and Fisheries

The size and relative location of natural community types present, as well as the nature of the surrounding landscape, largely determine the distribution and abundance of wildlife species (DeGraaf, 2005). Framingham's diverse assemblage of natural communities, including ponds, marshes, forests, and fields, supports a remarkable array of wildlife. However, to evaluate wildlife abundance and diversity in Framingham, one needs to look beyond the City boundaries. Much of Framingham's protected open space, located along its border, abuts conservation land in surrounding municipalities. Examples of this include: Nobscot Boy Scout Reservation (located partially in Sudbury), Callahan State Park (located partially in Marlboro), Wittenborg Woods (which abuts Sudbury Conservation Land to the north), and Cowassock Woods (which abuts Ashland Town Forest to the south). Several wetland and riverine systems also cross municipal boundaries, including Sudbury River, Beaver Dam Brook, and Stony Brook. These linkages create wildlife corridors and larger patches of protected open space, which in turn allows a greater variety of wildlife to be present.

E1. Inventory of Wildlife and Fisheries

Framingham's wildlife diversity and abundance have been measured using several methodologies. These include Biodiversity Day tallies, Christmas Bird Counts, and Breeding Bird Counts.

Mammals

Many mammal species have adapted to coexist with humans and have increased in abundance over the last 15 years. Once rare in Framingham, Fishers are now quite common. Beavers are well established in the City, particularly along the Sudbury River, Beaver Dam Brook, and Sucker Pond. The abundance of deer in Framingham is evident by the number of reported deer/car collisions, transmission of Lyme's disease, and overbrowsing of shrub and groundcover vegetation. Raccoons, squirrels, cottontail rabbits, woodchucks, and opossums inhabit the wooded land, especially in the northern section of Saxonville.

Birds

Bird populations have been variable. More people feed birds by putting up outdoor feeders and planting landscaping that attracts birds. This seems to enable southern birds, such as Carolina Wrens, to survive in the area year-round. But large flocks of northern birds, such as evening grosbeaks, pine grosbeaks, and purple finches, are diminishing. Still rebounding from the 1972 ban on DDT, bald eagles are reported occasionally around the Sudbury Reservoirs, and Cooper's hawks are often seen. After several attempts by the state to reintroduce the wild turkey, they are now common, sometimes observed in flocks of 20 to 40 birds. Turkey vultures, which were uncommon in Framingham 20+ years ago, are now observed regularly during warm weather. Flocks of bluebirds have been reestablished, thanks in part to many residents and organizations (such as Sudbury Valley Trustees) erecting and monitoring bluebird houses in fields. Not only is the red-bellied woodpecker increasing,

but the pileated woodpecker is also increasing. Mute swans, an introduced species from Europe, are becoming regulars in the vicinity of Farm Pond and the reservoirs. The oxbow of the Sudbury River in Saxonville serves as a refuge for many water birds, as it is too shallow and weed-grown to permit boating for most of the breeding season (US Department of the Interior).

Birds whose numbers have declined in recent years include indigo buntings, barn swallows (*Hirundo rustica*), wood ducks (*Aix sponsa*), eastern towhees, many species of warblers, chimney swifts, ruffed grouse, and pheasants.

Reptiles/Amphibians

There appears to be a general downward trend in population for many Massachusetts reptiles and amphibians. Framingham has identified five (5) vernal pools where rare amphibian species exist. Conservation staff and residents routinely assist the spotted salamanders, wood frogs, and spring peepers as they cross Hemenway Road in their quest to reach their ancestral vernal pools.

Fish

Framingham water bodies are home to a variety of fish species, including Chain Pickerel, Sunfish (*Enneacanthus obesus*), Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), Redfin Pickerel (*Esox americanus*), and Yellow Perch (*Perca flavescens*), among many others. The most diverse fish populations are in the Sudbury River, the MWRA Reservoirs, Lake Cochituate, and Waushakum Pond (Keller). Though fish caught in the Sudbury River are not suitable for eating due to high mercury content.

Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Wildlife

The following animals were listed in Massachusetts. Wildlife, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program in May 2013 as Endangered (E), Threatened (T), or of Special Concern (SC) under MESA (the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act) and/or the Federal Endangered Species List (Table 4-3).

Table 4-3. Wildlife in Framingham that is Threatened, Endangered, or Rare				
Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	MESA Status	Most Recent Observation
Amphibian	<i>Ambystoma laterale</i>	Blue-spotted Salamander	SC	2010
Amphibian	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Eastern Box Turtle	SC	2011
Amphibian	<i>Scaphiopus holbrookii</i>	Eastern Spadefoot	T	Historic
Beetle	<i>Cicindela duodecimguttata</i>	Twelve-spotted Tiger Beetle	SC	1907
Beetle	<i>Cicindela rufiventris hentzii</i>	Hentz's Red-bellied Tiger Beetle	T	1908

Beetle	<i>Cicindela purpurea</i>	Cow Path Tiger Beetle	SC	1928
Bird	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Golden-winged Warbler	E	1982
Bird	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	T	2019
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Apodrepanulatrix liberaria</i>	New Jersey Tea Inchworm	E	Historic
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Metarranthis apiciaria</i>	Barrens Metarranthis	E	Historic
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Lithophane viridipallens</i>	Pale Green Pinion Moth	SC	2013
Fish	<i>Notropis bifrenatus</i>	Bridle Shiner	SC	1962
Mussel	<i>Ligumia nasuta</i>	Eastern Pondmussel	SC	2017

Important Bird Areas

An Important Bird Area (IBA) is a site providing essential habitat to one or more species of breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds. The IBA program is a national initiative that leverages conservation partnerships to identify and monitor sites critical to birds during part of their life cycle, aiming to mitigate the impact of habitat loss and degradation on bird populations. These sites contain vulnerable, threatened, or endangered species, endemic species, species representative of a biome, or concentrations of seabirds, waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, waders, or migratory land birds. Massachusetts Audubon Society has identified two (2) IBAs in Framingham: Sudbury & Foss Reservoirs and Sudbury/Concord River Valley.

E2. Wildlife Corridors

Framingham's most expansive wildlife corridor follows the Sudbury River throughout the City. The Sudbury River is a warm water fishery and supports such species as catfish, Bluegill, Pumpkinseeds, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Perch, and Pickerel. It also supports introduced species such as carp. The Sudbury River corridor also supports several species of turtles and frogs, but the protection of adjacent riparian areas and uplands is critical to maintaining diversity along the Sudbury River corridor. The Sudbury River also supports several confirmed mammal species, including the river otter, muskrat, beaver, and mink. The corridor and associated upland open spaces support a diverse array of wildlife, including coyotes, deer, foxes, fishers, and numerous small mammals, such as voles, moles, and mice. These species then support the presence of several raptor species, such as hawks and owls. At the same time, osprey and even eagle, which rely primarily on fish as food sources, also inhabit the Sudbury River Corridor.

According to the SuAsCo Biodiversity Plan (2000), Nobscot Hill, Baiting Brook, Great Meadows, and Pod Meadow in Framingham are important areas of habitat for biodiversity. The shrub and cultivated field habitats of Baiting Brook are home to a diverse group of species. Bird species such as blue-winged warblers, brown thrashers, and mockingbirds thrive in this area. Field edges and utility rights-

of-way are other examples of shrub habitat, characterized by a dense mixture of young trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers. Nobscot Mountain is one of the few homes available to porcupines in the SuAsCo Watershed, as they prefer hemlock stands with rock outcrops. Grassland bird species are present in Callahan State Park, but they are declining due to the need for large tracts of land, which are typically found in agricultural areas. Abandoned field habitats are declining along the River corridor as successional growth overtakes the field and meadow habitats. This type of habitat often requires management to maintain, and more open space must be preserved along the Sudbury River Corridor to sustain wildlife corridors and biodiversity of the species and habitats.

The Hultman, Sudbury, and Weston Aqueducts traverse the City from east to west. These grassy-topped, naturalized areas are prime examples of continuous, linear wildlife corridors. As sections of the aqueducts are open for low-impact walking trails to the public, they will continue to serve their wildlife corridor functions, allowing the passage of critters and other larger animals. Other continuous, linear corridors, such as existing bike and pedestrian trails and railroad rights-of-way, also serve as wildlife corridors. There are numerous examples of open space parcels that abut these trail corridors, providing nesting and hunting habitats that support the various species that use these wildlife corridors. However, some of these open space parcels are not protected through outright ownership or by conservation restriction, and the threat of development always looms. The City is proactive in land protection and conservation efforts, actively pursuing land acquisition to support biodiversity and open space areas. Additionally, combinations of State and City-owned conservation lands, including Sudbury Valley Trustees-owned lands in the northwest quadrant of the City, are sufficient for wildlife corridors.

F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Historic and cultural resources are aspects of the environment that reflect the activities and human contributions of an area. These resources give communities their character, sense of time and place, and contribute to the quality of life in an area. They include historic buildings and structures, scenic roads and landscapes, essential institutions and landmarks, street scenes, geological features, and other notable elements. The river is a historical resource as it was important in Indian and Colonial settlements and to the historic evolution of the City. It also provides natural open space for recreation today. Unusual and unique aspects of the Framingham landscape include features like peaks, bedrock outcroppings, rock layers, and drumlins. All these elements, in conjunction with the other natural features, define a community's unique or special character. (Map 6: Unique Cultural Features).

Framingham benefits from the existence of both privately owned resources and city-owned conservation and recreation areas. The value attributed to scenic landscapes is based on values that

most people consider to be intrinsic to their own well-being. These include clean air and water, open space, solitude, and harmony between man and nature.

F1. Scenic Landscapes

State Scenic Landscape Designation

As part of a statewide preservation effort, the Department of Environmental Management (now the Department of Conservation and Recreation) conducted a survey in 1983 to assess the Commonwealth's scenic landscape inventory. The inventory uses three (3) classes of scenic quality: "distinctive", "noteworthy", and "common." Distinctive landscapes encompass areas of the highest visual quality, comprising only about 4% of the Commonwealth. "Noteworthy" landscapes consist of somewhat less significant, although still important, visual quality and are limited to only 5% of the Commonwealth. The "common" landscapes, comprising 91% of the Commonwealth's landscape, contain smaller sections of scenic quality but do not have the consistently high levels found in distinctive and noteworthy areas.

DEM's 1983 survey indicates that much of northwest Framingham is designated as "Distinctive" or "Noteworthy" (MDC Public Access Plan). Farms, horse fields, wooded hills, and stream corridors dominate this area. The threat of development in this area is high.

Additional Scenic Areas

The expanses of state park land, municipal conservation land, and private open space and agricultural land in the northwest of Framingham, and the expanse of reservoirs, free-flowing river, and open space in the southwest of Framingham, are all true treasures.

Scenic River Views

Scenic areas along the Sudbury River were identified during field investigations for the report titled "The Sudbury River: A Community Resource - Opportunities and Strategies." The report lists 18 vantage points for visual access to scenic locations and interesting river views from land. The river is most scenic by the Fenwick Street Dam, near the Massachusetts Turnpike; near the Wickford Road Bridge; in the wide areas of the river before the Saxonville Dam; and around the Oxbow near the City line (Margolis, Fairbairn).

Scenic Roads

The roads listed in Table 4-4 below are designated as "scenic roads" by the Framingham Planning Board. In general, the roads represent the City's historic and rural qualities. Any repair, maintenance, reconstruction, or paving work along scenic roads that involves cutting or removing trees or destroying a portion of a stone wall requires approval from the Planning Board. The Framingham Planning Board shall conduct a study to determine if any roadways within the City not currently classified as a scenic road should be designated as a scenic road.

Table 4-4. Scenic Roads in Framingham	
Auburn Street	In its entirety
Auburn Street Ext.	In its entirety
Barber Road	In its entirety
Belknap Road	From Pleasant Street to a point 300 feet West of Grove Street, and from a point about 850 feet East of Grove Street to Edgell Road
Bethany Road	Winthrop Street to the Ashland town line
Central Street	From Edgell Road to Concord Street
Dennison Avenue	In its entirety
Edgell Road	In its entirety
Edmands Road	In its entirety
Fenwick Street	In its entirety
Grove Street	In its entirety
Hemenway Road	In its entirety
Kellogg Street	In its entirety
Lake Road	In its entirety
Lakeview Road	In its entirety
Main Street	In its entirety
Mansfield Street	In its entirety
Maple Street	In its entirety
Merchant Road	In its entirety
Mill Street	In its entirety
Millwood Street	In its entirety
Nixon Road	In its entirety
Parker Road	In its entirety
Parmenter Road	In its entirety
Pond Street	In its entirety
Prindiville Avenue	In its entirety
Prospect Street	In its entirety
Salem End Road	Winter Street to Ashland Line
Singletery Lane	In its entirety
State Street	In its entirety
Warren Road	In its entirety
Wayside Inn Road	In its entirety
Winch Street	In its entirety
Winter Street	Salem End Road to Fountain Street

F2. Major Characteristics and Unusual Geologic Features

The Framingham landscape contains many noteworthy geologic features. Gibbs Mountain in Callahan State Park stands at an elevation of 511 feet, and Nobscott Hill on the northern border of

Framingham and Sudbury has an elevation of 602 feet, making it the highest point in the City. The Nobscott Scouts of America Reservation also contains unique bedrock outcroppings, accessible through Edgell Road. In the Northwest, gneiss and granite rock layers show Framingham’s storied geologic history, and till and drumlins throughout the City landscape are geological remnants of the last ice age. In the Southeast, the Sudbury aqueduct flows from Bracket and Foss Reservoir, through Farm Pond, to Boston’s Chestnut Hill. Built from 1875 to 1878 and used until 1978, the Sudbury aqueduct, as well as the Weston aqueduct in the northeast of the City, are emergency backups to the MWRA. On May 1st, 2010, a supply pipe in Weston broke, and Framingham’s emergency backups successfully served communities around Boston.

F3. Cultural and Archeological Resources

Native Americans of the Red Paint tribe are considered to be the first settlers of the Sudbury River area. Their appearance as hunters and fishermen can be dated as early as 2000 BC. At least three (3) distinctive Indian settlements have been discovered along the river: the Mt. Wayte area, the falls southeast of Saxonville, and the vicinity near Lake Cochituate (Hofman, Stein).

The significance of these sites represents prehistoric settlement patterns that developed within the Sudbury Watershed areas. Areas of concentrated prehistoric activity exist at the confluence of the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord riverways (MDC Public Access Plan).

F4. Historical Resources

Framingham has numerous entries in historic listings shown in Table 4-5 below.

Table 4-5. Framingham Entries in Historic Listings	
Listings	Number of Entries
National Register of Historic Places District	4
National Register of Historic Places Individual Listing	8
National Register of Historic Places Thematic Resource Areas	4
Framingham Local Historic Districts	6
Framingham Local Historic District (LHD) properties	72
Properties with preservation restrictions	8
Historic American Building Survey (HABS)	9

Framingham’s current Cultural Resource Inventory is the result of documentation efforts beginning primarily in the late 1970s. Its principal purpose is to provide the City and the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC) with a list of resources that should have their architectural and/or historical value considered before any work is done by Federal, State, or City agencies that might harm their historic significance. Like many communities in Massachusetts, the inventory is uneven in quality and

coverage, surveying some areas well and others poorly. The inventory can be found in the 2016 Historical Preservation Plan, although additional properties have been added since that time.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the American cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program that coordinates and supports public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archaeological resources. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. These resources contribute to an understanding of the nation's historical and cultural foundations. The National Register program provides federal, state, and local governments and the general public with: (1) National recognition of the value of historic properties individually and collectively to the nation; (2) Eligibility for federal tax incentives and other preservation assistance; and (3) Assistance in cultural resource planning. Listing a resource is not merely honorary, but also offers protection from the negative impacts of federally funded projects and makes properties eligible for specific grants and essential tax incentives.

Framingham has four (4) historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are areas of historic or architectural significance. Each of the districts contains buildings that are among the over 1,000 buildings, structures, sites, and objects listed in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) inventory for the City of Framingham. Framingham also has seven (7) thematic resource areas listed on the National Register, shown in Table 4-6 below.

Table 4-6. Current National Register Listed Properties	
Historic Districts	Year Listed
Irving Square District (Irving and Hollis Streets)	1981
Concord Square District (Concord and Park Streets)	1983
Framingham Centre Historic District (Common)	1990
Saxonville Historic District (Center and Elm Streets)	1992
Individual Thematic Resource Areas (related to water supply systems)	
Framingham Reservoir #1 Dam and Gatehouse (Off Winter Street)	1990
Framingham Reservoir #2 Dam and Gatehouse (Off Winter Street)	1990
Framingham Reservoir #3 Dam and Gatehouse (Off Worcester Road)	1990
Lake Cochituate Dam (NW side of Lake Cochituate)	1990
Thematic Resource Area Districts (related to water supply systems that involve several towns)	
Weston Aqueduct Linear District	1990

Sudbury Dam District	1990
Sudbury Aqueduct Linear District	1990

Local Historic Districts

Framingham has 6 Local Historic Districts listed in Table 4-8 below.

Table 4-8. Local Historic Districts	
Area of Fram.	Historic Site or Area
Fram. Centre	Centre Common Historic District
Fram. Centre	Jonathan Maynard Historic District
	Peter and Sarah Clayes House Historic District
	Pike-Haven-Foster House Historic District
	H. H. Richardson Depot Historic District
	John Hemenway House Historic District

Historic Village Centers

The preservation of the four (4) distinct village centers has maintained the historic character of the City despite its growth in the past few decades.

- **South Framingham:** South Framingham became the City's commercial center in 1834 when the Boston & Maine Railroad was constructed. This area is now recognized with two National Register of Historic Places Districts. The railroad station was completed in 1885, at a time when more than 100 trains a day passed through the station. It is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is designated as an individual local historic district.
- **Saxonville:** is the location of the first mill in the City and later, the Roxbury Carpet Company. This area, also a National Register of Historic Places district, includes the Saxonville Athenaeum and examples of mid-19th-century mill worker housing.
- **Framingham Centre:** was the City's civic center from 1701 until 1926. The area surrounding the Village Hall encompasses both a National Register District and a Local Historic District, with distinct boundaries. The Jonathan Maynard Historic District, along Pleasant Street, contains historically and architecturally significant 19th-century homes.
- **Nobscot:** Nobscot (originally Brackett's Corner and known for a while as New Boston) has many 17th and 18th-century rural homes on the winding old roads, although much of its historic village core has been lost.

Historic Buildings, Sites, Structures, and Objects

Framingham has over 1,000 historic resources identified in MACRIS. Many of these are buildings scattered throughout Framingham and may not be located within a distinct district. The buildings are too numerous to map, but the listing is on file with the Community & Economic Development Department, Framingham Historical Commission, Framingham Library, and the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Some buildings are part of a grouping of structures that gives them extra meaning in terms of their cultural value. These groupings may be neighborhoods, historic districts, or institutional complexes (such as buildings of Framingham State University).

Framingham also has 34 objects, six (6) cemeteries (“burial grounds”), and 44 structures (e.g., bridges) identified in MACRIS. Stone’s Bridge over the Sudbury River, just north of Potter Rd., was built in 1857 and is jointly owned by Framingham and Wayland. It is a special case as a hurricane damaged it and is no longer an active vehicle bridge that a routine bridge maintenance program would cover. The connection to the Framingham side of the river has been removed.

In 1991, Town Meeting passed a Historic Preservation By-law that provides for a delay period before historically or architecturally significant structures can be demolished. The Historical Commission must determine if any building over 75 years old that is to be demolished is substantial. While listing in this inventory does not automatically indicate significance, it would be an important factor in making the determination. Other factors include recognition in the National Register of Historic Places or by another organization, such as the Framingham History Center. A Historic Reuse Zoning By-law was adopted at the 2008 Annual Town Meeting and updated in 2017. The By-law provides an opportunity to preserve larger historic buildings by allowing additional uses beyond those permitted by right.

F5. Unique Environments

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

There are no Areas of Critical Environmental Concern designated or proposed within the City. The Secretary of Environmental Affairs may designate Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) for natural areas of regional or statewide significance. The designation requires that all new developments within the ACEC be reviewed under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA, an interdisciplinary program that examines the environmental impacts of significant new developments). No proposed uses or developments are allowed in an ACEC that might environmentally degrade the area.

Core Habitats and Critical Natural Landscapes

As mentioned previously, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy, developed the BioMap2 strategy with the intention of conserving biodiversity across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. By combining elements of geospatial data about the state’s species, ecosystems, and landscapes, two key areas are identified: Core Habitats and Critical Natural Landscapes. Core Habitats refer to areas which “ensure the long-term persistence of species of conservation concern, exemplary natural communities, and intact ecosystems”³ in the State. Critical Natural Landscapes are those areas “better able to support ecological processes, disturbances, and wide-ranging species.”⁴ Identification of these areas promotes land development that serves to protect the rich biodiversity in Massachusetts.

According to the latest BioMap2 analysis, Framingham contains eight (8) Core Habitats and seven (7) Critical Natural Landscapes. Each Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape contains elements (aquatic/forest/wetland cores, buffers of these cores, species of conservation concern, etc.) that make it an essential and unique conservation area to protect. Table 4-9 describes these areas in more detail:

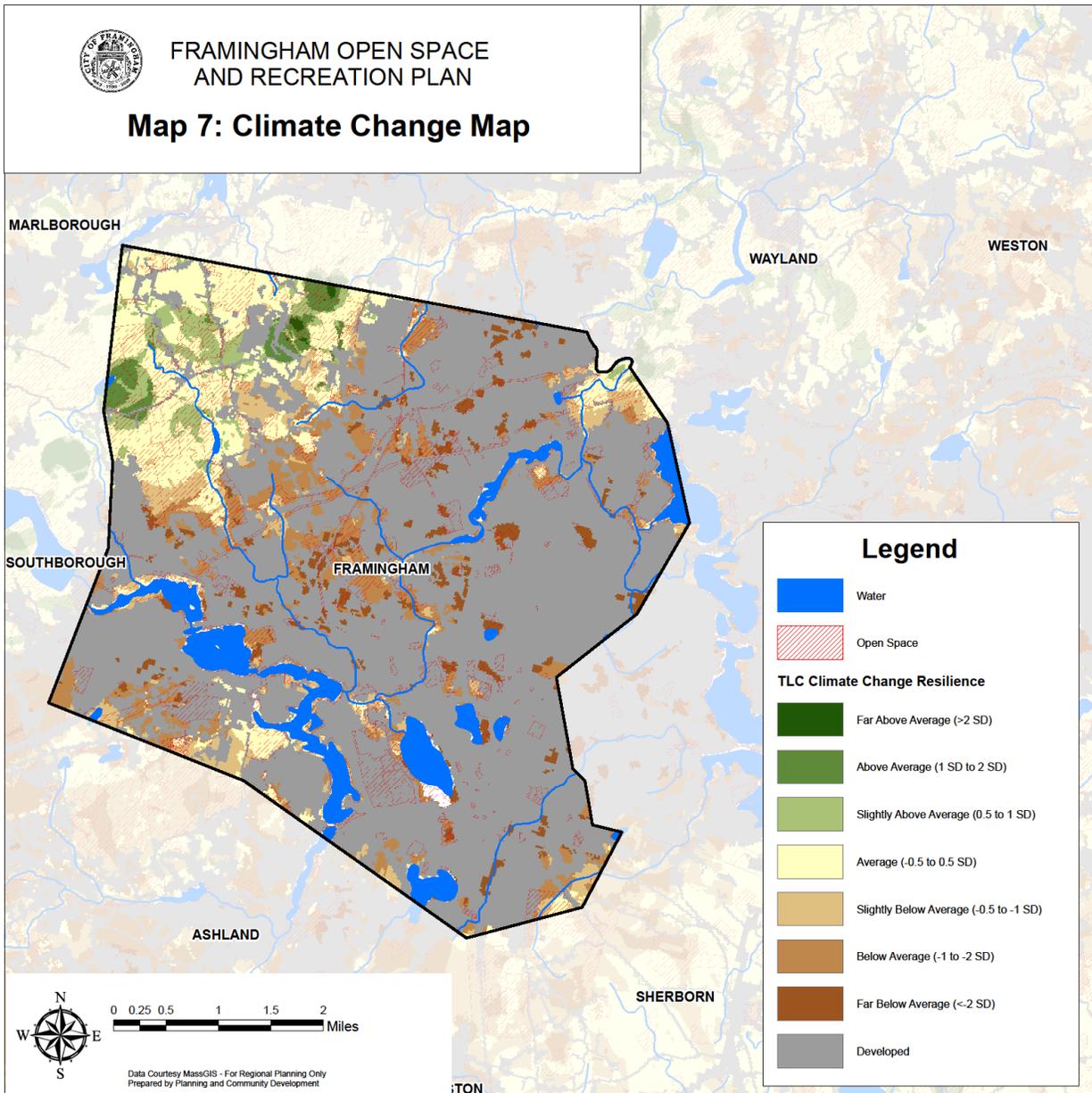
Table 4-9. BioMap2 Habitats in Framingham	
BioMap2	Elements of Habitat
Core 1590	4-acre Core Habitat Aquatic Core Species of Conservation Concern (Engelmann’s Umbrella-sedge)
Core 1652	79-acre Core Habitat Aquatic Core Species of Conservation Concern (Engelmann’s Umbrella-sedge)
Core 1753	10-acre Core Habitat Wetland Core
Core 1754	767-acre Core Habitat Aquatic Core Species of Conservation Concern (Eastern Pondmussel)
Core 1781	11-acre Core Habitat Wetland Core
Core 1792	6-acre Core Habitat Wetland Core
Core 1798	29-acre Core Habitat Species of Conservation Concern (Four-toed Salamander)
Core 1830	1,533-acre Core Habitat Aquatic Core Species of Conservation Concern (Blue-spotted Salamander, Eastern Box Turtle)

³ Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs. BioMap2: Overview and Summary. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/dfw/natural-heritage/land-protection-and-management/biomap2/biomap2-overview-and-summary.html>

⁴ *Ibid.*

CNL 807	4-acre Critical Natural Landscape Aquatic Core Buffer
CNL 838	204-acre Critical Natural Landscape Aquatic Core Buffer
CNL 881	36-acre Critical Natural Landscape Wetland Core Buffer
CNL 882	849-acre Critical Natural Landscape Aquatic Core Buffer
CNL 888	33-acre Critical Natural Landscape Wetland Core Buffer
CNL 907	1,600-acre Critical Natural Landscape Aquatic Core Buffer Landscape Block
CNL 1016	4,343-acre Critical Natural Landscape Aquatic Core Buffer Wetland Core Buffer

G. Environmental Problems: Impacts of Development



Introduction

It is essential to assess the impact of development and plan accordingly to preserve open space and natural corridors. Residential and commercial developments have affected and continue to affect open space and recreation in many ways. The loss of parcels that had not been considered threatened, such as the Millwood Golf Course, continues to erode the open space opportunities within the City. In addition, climate change continues to exacerbate the threats caused by

development to open space and natural habitat areas by increasing the likelihood of significant impacts from storm events. This is addressed in more detail in the City’s Municipal Vulnerability Plan.

G1. Hazardous Waste and Brownfields

Brownfields

The US EPA defines “brownfields” as abandoned or underutilized properties (especially industrial and commercial facilities) wherein redevelopment or expansion is complicated by possible environmental contamination (real or perceived). The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (Mass DEP) currently lists 522 brownfield sites in Framingham. The list is available at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/cleanup/sitesloc.htm>.

The City of Framingham’s Planning and Community Development Division has been conducting a Brownfields Program since 2008. The City has received a total of \$1.1M in Brownfields Assessment Grants from the US Environmental Protection Agency, most recently in 2017. These grants are intended to “provide funding for recipients to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct cleanup and redevelopment planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites.” The grants are “community-wide” as opposed to “site-specific,” allowing the City to investigate and assess a number of brownfield sites in Downtown and Southeast Framingham. The bulk of the funding supports a state-approved Licensed Site Professional (LSP) to inventory brownfield sites in the study area and to conduct more detailed assessments on a select series of sites chosen based on their potential for redevelopment and reuse. The grant provides for a targeted public outreach campaign that includes multi-lingual education and opportunities for community feedback on both brownfields and redevelopment issues. This project can have far-reaching effects, including mitigating environmental impacts, stimulating economic development, and engaging underserved and minority populations.

Brownfield properties tend to be located in environmental justice communities, and this is the case in Framingham. One of the program's goals has been to identify and utilize brownfield funds to support open space and recreation opportunities. Through a joint effort of the City’s Agricultural Committee, the Parks and Recreation Department, and Community and Economic Development (Now Planning and Community Development), a community garden was established on Pratt Street in South Framingham in 2011. Brownfields funds were also leveraged to complete the Cochituate Rail Trail and the new Irving Street Park, a new pocket park built in downtown.

Hazardous Waste Generators and Hazardous Waste Sites

The City of Framingham has a long history of industrial activity and is faced with the challenges of addressing both the current and historic impacts associated with these activities. There are currently approximately 270 facilities in Framingham with an active Hazardous Waste Identification Number (EPA ID) issued through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). These facilities generate and/or store hazardous waste as part of their ongoing operations.

The MassDEP tracks reported releases of oil or hazardous material by assigning a Release Tracking Number (RTN) to each incident. The scale and complexity of the releases vary widely, ranging from relatively small spills that can be cleaned up and closed out in a matter of days to large facilities that have had numerous releases or those that occurred over a long period of time. The assessment and remediation of the more complex Sites can take decades to complete. Since the MassDEP began assigning RTNs in 1986, 644 RTNs have been assigned to locations in Framingham. Approximately 55 of the RTNs remain open as all of the assessment and remedial activities required to close each Site in the MassDEP system have not been completed. The majority of the complex historical sites are located on the south side of the City in what have since been classified as Environmental Justice Areas. Three of the more notable long-term Sites that have significantly impacted environmental resources in Framingham are the former Manufactured Gas Plant (MGP) Site located at 350 Irving Street (RTN 3-0589), the former General Chemical Corporation facility at 133 Leland Street (RTN 3-19174), and the former burn dump and landfill (currently Mary Dennison Park) at 54 Beaver Street (RTN 3-32015).

In addition to these sites in Framingham, the Nyanza Chemical Waste Dump in Ashland, which was placed on the National Priorities List in September 1983, has impacted surface water and sediments in Framingham. Contaminants have migrated from the Nyanza site and now affect the entire Sudbury River and its associated reservoirs in Framingham, where sediments are primarily impacted by mercury.

G2. Landfills

Framingham has no active landfills, but there are two (2) former landfill sites.

The Dudley Road Dump Site, approximately 9.3 acres in size, lies just to the north of Farm Pond. In 1977, the Department of Public Works received notice from the Department of Environmental Quality Engineering (now the Department of Environmental Protection, or DEP) that improper covering and grading at the Dudley Road site had resulted in leachate pollution to Eames Brook. The Town was asked to take corrective actions. In 2004, DEP studies of leachate in Eames Brook revealed that bacterial concentrations were relatively low, especially in the vicinity of the landfill, suggesting that the landfill was not a significant source of bacterial pollution in the brook. Additionally, the 2004 EPA studies indicated that there were no water quality impairments to the brook. Due to its proximity to Farm Pond and the adjacent park and recreation complexes, this site is planned for eventual recreational reuse.

A second former landfill is located near the Staples complex off Crossing Boulevard. The landfill ceased operations and has been capped in accordance with the required regulations, featuring

bituminous pavement and clean, granular soil. The site has been developed with a three-story, 100,000-square-foot office and light manufacturing building, as well as a parking lot.

G3. Chronic Flooding

Floodplains are delineated based on topography, hydrology, and development characteristics of the area. In Framingham, the 100- and 500-year floodplains were analyzed and mapped in 1972 by the National Flood Insurance Program through Flood Insurance Rate (FIRM) maps, and again in 2014. The 100-year floodplain is an accurate indicator of flood-prone areas, unless the area has experienced a significant increase in impervious surfaces since the mapping was done in 1972, in which case, flood-prone areas may extend beyond the 100-year floodplain. Planning to begin to address these areas can be found in both the MHMP and the MVP. Areas most susceptible to recurrent flooding in the recent past are listed below in Table 4-11.

Table 4-11. Areas of High Flood Potential		
Stream section	Flooding Location	Nature of Flooding
Beaver Dam Brook	From a point approximately 180' downstream of Second St. to a point approximately 2.2 miles upstream	This historically low-lying area (now with a channelized brook) floods during intense storms
East Outlet of Baiting Brook	From its confluence with the Sudbury River to divergence from Baiting Brook by Edgell Grove and Central St.	Numerous sources contribute to flooding.
Circle Dr., Auburn St. Extension, & Union Ave.	Residential areas	The Sudbury River "backs up" into this area
Walnut St.	The "Sucker Brook" area	The Sudbury River "backs up" into this area
The Sudbury River	Various bridge locations	Some bridges flood and become impassable

Much has been done to reduce flood potential:

- The Sudbury Reservoir and the Framingham Reservoir system provide some storage volume, which decreases peak flood flows on the Sudbury River within the City.
- Saxonville used to be prone to flooding, but the Saxonville Local Flood Control Protection Project was completed in 1979 at a cost of \$4.75 million. The project extends from the Saxonville Dam to the Danforth Street Bridge and consists of 3,850 feet of earthen dikes and concrete walls, a pump station at Watson Place, a steel vehicular gate at Concord Street, and a

sluice gate at the Central Street Dam. The project straightened a 1,000-foot section of the Sudbury River upstream from the Danforth Street Bridge. The City of Framingham operates and maintains the project. (Note: The project does not include the Central Street Dam itself, which is privately owned and operated.). In August 2009, the levee was recertified for a 100-year flood event.

- The Soil Conservation Service (now the National Resource Conservation Service) constructed a flood control project for the Baiting Brook watershed, which reduces the severity of flooding along major portions of Baiting Brook and Birch Meadow Brook. The project includes a dry dam on Baiting Brook, as well as culvert and channel modifications to the east outlet diversion channel.
- Framingham installed a gate on Eames Brook that can be lowered to prevent the Sudbury River from backing up. During times of high water, the DPW lowers the gate and installs a pump, then pumps water from Farm Pond into the Sudbury River to alleviate flooding around Farm Pond.
- Development in the floodplain can increase the likelihood of flooding by decreasing flood storage and increasing the surface runoff into the stream channel. Additionally, water contamination from flood-damaged sewage or septic systems, as well as debris swept downstream from flooded properties, can pose unnecessary hazards to those downstream. Therefore, development in floodplains is regulated by the Conservation Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals to protect health, safety, and property.
- The DPW maintains five (5) river level sensors, two (2) along the Sudbury River at Main Street and at Watson Place, one along Beaver Dam Brook at Taralli Terrace, one along Hop Brook at Hemenway Road, and one along Dunsdell Brook at McAdams Road. These sensors provide real-time information for the Highway Department to manage flooding in areas of greatest concern.

G4. Ground and Surface Water Pollution

General Sources of Water Pollution

Water pollution can generally be described in terms of non-point source pollution and point source pollution.

Non-point source pollution results from surface runoff from parking lots, roadways, driveways, lawns, and other impervious surfaces that collect oil, fertilizers, and other harmful substances. Water (with

all its associated pollutants) can no longer be absorbed into the soil and is carried over the impervious surfaces directly to streams, ponds, lakes, and other water bodies.

Point source pollution, as the name suggests, is related to a particular source of pollution. A specific drain, such as a storm drain or other identifiable drainage source, causes point source pollution. Significant sources of point source pollution in Framingham include Adesa (the former GM plant on Western Blvd.) and the Nyanza Superfund Site upstream in Ashland.

General Results of Water Pollution

Algal blooms are caused by excessive nutrients that contribute to blooms of nuisance aquatic vegetation, such as milfoil and algae. The algal and vascular plant blooms are unpleasant in their own right, covering entire water bodies with thick layers of green algae, watermeal, or duckweed. Then further problems occur. Decay of plant matter results in the depletion of dissolved oxygen within the water, and therefore, fish kills and subsequently high bacterial counts. This cycle often forces the City to close the swimming beaches. Eutrophic conditions and nuisance aquatic vegetation have been documented in most of the City's ponds. An active weed control program has been in place since 1992, employing chemical controls on an as-needed basis in the City's major ponds to address blooms of exotic and nuisance macrophytes and algae.

Murkiness is caused by suspended sediment that contributes to the murkiness, reducing visibility and also affecting aquatic wildlife and native aquatic plants.

Toxic pollution is the result of toxicants, such as E. coli and heavy metals, that cause ill-health and prevent certain uses of water bodies.

Water Quality in the Sudbury River and its Major Tributaries (Table 4-12)

- Water quality problems in the Sudbury and Concord Rivers are generally related to non-point source pollution, such as run-off.
- Depressed dissolved oxygen levels during low-flow summer months are the primary water quality problem. This problem is predominantly caused by wetland drainage into the rivers.
- High bacterial levels occur throughout Framingham.
- Mercury-contaminated fish have been found in the Sudbury River since 1970, and the river has been posted, indicating warnings since 1986 (US Department of the Interior). Elevated levels of chlorinated hydrocarbons, PCBs, and mercury found in fish have been attributed to past pesticide applications in swamps and agricultural lands. They may indicate pesticide pollution of the river system (US Department of the Interior). The sediment in Reservoirs 1 & 2 (now "off-line") has also been contaminated with mercury from the Nyanza Superfund Site upstream in Ashland.

Table 4-12. SuAsCo Watershed Water Quality Assessment Report (2001)				
RIVER SEGMENT	Sudbury River	Eames Brook	Sudbury River	Cochituate Brook
Description	From outlet of Res #1 to inlet of Saxonville Pond	From outlet of Farm Pond to confluence w/ Sudbury River	Saxonville Dam to Wayland line (and beyond)	from the outlet of Lake Cochituate to the confluence w/ Sudbury
Length	2.8 miles	0.6 miles	5.5 miles	1.3 miles
Classification	Class B, Warm Water Fishery	Class B	Class B, Aquatic Life	Class B
Sub-watershed area	82.1 mi ²	1.24 mi ² watershed	116.4 mi ²	20.2 mi ² watershed
Land-use estimates	Forest: 44%	Commercial: 13%	Forest: 39%	Commercial: 9%
	Residential: 28%	Residential: 17%	Residential: 33%	Residential: 40%
	Open land: 7%	Open land: 25%	Open land: 7%	Forest: 27%
Impervious area	10.9mi ² (13.3%)	0.34 mi ² (27.4%)	17.1 mi ² (14.7%)	4.5 mi ²
State segment coder	MA82A-26	MA82A-13	MA82A-03	MA82A-22
Assessment sum'y	Cat 5 impaired	Cat 5 impaired	Cat 5 impaired	
Notes	requires a TMDL for metals, four closed or inactive landfills in sub-watershed	noxious aquatic plants, and exotic species (non-pollutant) and a TMDL is required; Framingham Compost Site and former landfill is located within this sub-watershed	requires a TMDL for metals	
Use: Aquatic Life	Impaired	<i>Not Assessed</i>	Support	Impaired
Cause	Benthic macroinvertebrate			Organic enrichment biological indicators
Source	Upstream Impoundment			Upstream impoundment, Municipal urbanized high-density area, discharges from municipal separate storm sewers (MS4s)
Cause	Mercury		Mercury	
Source	Nyanza Superfund Site		Nyanza Superfund Site, Atmospheric deposition	
Use: primary contact	<i>Not Assessed</i>	Impaired	<i>Not Assessed</i>	<i>Not Assessed</i>
Cause				
Source				
Use: secondary contact	<i>Not Assessed</i>	Impaired	<i>Not Assessed</i>	<i>Not Assessed</i>
Cause		Trash/debris, excess algal growth, sediment odor, fecal coliform bacteria		
Source		Discharges from municipal separate storm sewers (MS4s), landfill, and municipal urbanized high-density areas		
Use: Aesthetics	Support	Impaired	<i>Not Assessed</i>	Support
Cause		Trash/debris, excess algal growth, sediment odor		
Source		Discharges from municipal separate storm sewers (MS4s), landfill, municipal, urbanized, high-density areas		

From: SuAsCo Watershed Year 2001 Water Quality Assessment Report <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/resources/82wqar3.pdf>

The Nyanza Chemical Waste dump is located off Megunko Road in Ashland, MA. From 1917 to 1978, several companies involved in the manufacture of chemical textile dyes and other products occupied the site, with Nyanza operating from 1965 to 1978.

The Site is divided into four Operable Units (OUs) based on the type and location of contamination, with the Sudbury River in Framingham included in OU4. Chemical wastes were disposed of in various locations on the Site property, and manufacturing wastewater effluent and overflow from an underground concrete vault were discharged into adjacent wetlands and drainageways connected to the Sudbury River. Mercury was the primary contaminant discharged into the Sudbury River. It is estimated that approximately 45-57 metric tons of mercury were released to the river. Since 1983, the EPA has conducted extensive studies of the site to determine the distribution and levels of mercury in the Sudbury River. These studies confirmed that mercury was dispersed intermittently along the 26 miles of river that traverses Ashland, Framingham, Sudbury, Wayland, Lincoln, and Concord, where sediment and fish tissue exhibit mercury contamination.

Water Quality in Framingham's Lakes and Ponds

All lakes and ponds in Framingham exhibit some signs of pollution, most prevalently, excessive nutrients (eutrophic conditions) and consequent nuisance aquatic plant growth.

Learned Pond has suffered from non-point source pollution. The City has begun addressing some of the issues of stormwater runoff. More is needed. A learned pond is a kettle hole depression with no natural outlet; therefore, contaminants can accumulate without active improvements to stormwater management. More is needed.

Water quality in Lake Cochituate has been good in recent years. However, there has been a recent surge in the growth of nuisance aquatic vegetation, accompanied by a corresponding decline in visibility, which must be addressed aggressively. The State Department of Conservation and Recreation's Lakes and Ponds Program, along with support from Framingham, Wayland, and Natick, has been actively addressing the issue for nearly a decade.

Weekly testing is performed for total coliform and fecal coliform at all three of Framingham's city beaches during the 8-week swimming season. If the results are high (indicating an abnormal level), the beach is closed for swimming, and tests are performed daily. Problems are generally attributable to geese, intense human use, and pet waste.

G5. Habitat Fragmentation Due to Development

The connectivity of open and green spaces continues to diminish with increased development. Due to the high property value in the region, the development of open space remains profitable, even in areas such as wet, steep, or rocky land.

Expansion of existing development continues as well. This includes:

- Expansion of homes, driveways, and lawns;
- Infill development in existing commercial and industrial developments;
- Infill development of “wood lots” in residential neighborhoods
- Subdivision of large parcels, and;
- Division of properties through the “Approval Not Required Under the Subdivision Law of Massachusetts” (ANR) process.

G6. Stormwater Management, Erosion, and Sedimentation

Stormwater is the water that runs over land after a rainfall event. It carries with it sediment, nutrients, and toxicants that it picks up from the ground. Sediment (clean or contaminated) is then deposited in catch basins, wetlands, and stream channels. In Framingham, as is the case everywhere, sedimentation degrades natural habitat and introduces contamination into wetland systems. With the great expanses of pavement and rooftops, as well as the discharge of stormwater to municipal storm sewer systems, natural infiltration and treatment of stormwater is greatly diminished. To compound the issue, older infrastructure was constructed prior to the advent of stormwater best management practices and treatment systems. As a result, the health of wetland systems and the quality of groundwater are negatively impacted by stormwater discharge.

Stormwater is managed to increase recharge, minimize flooding, limit erosion, and limit sedimentation. Recharge of stormwater into the ground, i.e., infiltration of stormwater, is critical for the maintenance of groundwater supply, maintenance of stream and river base flow during dry months, flood control, removal of pollutants, and the maintenance of ecosystems. Historically, drainage systems have been built as networks of catchments and pipes designed to quickly collect and transport stormwater away from impervious surfaces and developments to prevent flooding. These systems, therefore, bypass the local area and transport stormwater directly to nearby water bodies without opportunity for infiltration.

The land area adjacent to streams, lakes, or rivers that is likely to be inundated during snowmelt, storm, and flood events is known as the “floodplain”. Floodplains are categorized according to the average frequency of flooding. For inland areas, categorizations include Zone X (minimal flood hazard, 0.02% chance of flooding), Zone A (0.1% chance of flooding), and Zone AE (0.1% chance of flooding, includes a published base flood elevation).

Environmental quality is notably diminished when erosion and permanent soil loss are prevalent. Erosion reduces the land's ability to maintain vegetative cover, habitat, and increased infiltration, among other effects. Steep slopes are particularly susceptible to erosion when vegetation is removed

and/or soils are disturbed. Fortunately, no severe or chronic erosion problems are currently known to exist in Framingham.

Sedimentation, the deposition of sediment from flowing waters, alters the physical features of a water body or buffer zone by modifying vegetation, water depth, surface characteristics, circulation patterns, and flow rates. These physical changes can have a significant effect on water quality (due to the alteration of the natural self-purification processes) and habitat quality. Framingham actively tracks, monitors, and cleans its catch basins and stormwater outfalls on a predetermined schedule, as well as as needed.

G7. Invasive Plants

One of the most conspicuous and unfortunate changes in Framingham is the rapid spread of non-native, invasive plants. Despite efforts by the City and individuals to attenuate these species, they are establishing themselves on roadsides, fields, woods, and ponds. These species outcompete native vegetation, which in turn negatively impacts the native wildlife that relies on these native species.

Some of the most common invasive terrestrial plants include Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*), tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*), Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), and wisteria. The Conservation Department's seasonal land management program heavily focuses on the management of terrestrial invasive species on the City's Conservation parcels.

Some of the most common invasive aquatic or wetland plants include Eurasian milfoil, purple loosestrife, water chestnut, and phragmites. Together, they choke out large areas of the Sudbury River and local ponds.

The Framingham Conservation Department has managed a Nuisance Aquatic Vegetation Management Program on six of Framingham's Lakes and Ponds for nearly twenty years. These are Waushakum, Farm, Learned, Gleason, Norton, and Mohawk ponds. Working with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Towns of Wayland and Natick, the Conservation Department has supported the control of aquatic invasive plants on Lake Cochituate.

Additionally, the Conservation Department initiated a program to control aquatic invasive plants, starting with water chestnut, on the 1.3-mile section of the Sudbury River upstream of the Saxonville Dam. The department has successfully lobbied the DCR to begin management of water chestnut on the Stearns Reservoir (Framingham Reservoir #1).

G8. Litter

The accumulation of litter has become a significant problem, particularly in small areas of natural habitat within heavily developed regions. Trash is dumped in "abandoned" lots (often municipal open spaces, where trash is discarded from cars or pedestrians, and litter is blown from trash barrels that await pickup). Litter is not only unsightly but also tends to attract further dumping, degrade habitats, and poison wildlife.

G9. Environmental Equity

In order to evaluate whether there is an equal distribution of open space and recreation lands across the City, census tracts and open space data were compared to determine the average protected open space acreage per person in Framingham. This ratio was then compared to the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) average of 10 acres per 1000 people.⁵ On a city-wide scale, the total open space acreage and population show an average of 39 acres per 1000 people across the City.

This analysis was conducted for the 2013 plan but has not been updated for this plan, as the most recent population data by census tract is from 2010, and the City has not added any significant open space on the south side. This remains a pressing need for the community.

In 2013, ten of fourteen census tracts in Framingham exceeded the NRPA's average (see Table 4-14 and image below). Census Tract 383902, located in the northwest area of the City, where Callahan State Park is situated, contains the most open space per person, with 138 acres for every 1,000 residents. Four census tracts, however, do not meet the 10 acres per 1000 people standard. Census Tracts 383102, 383200, 383101, and 383400 are all located in the most densely populated area of the City within the downtown and south side of Framingham. These census tracts also contain environmental justice neighborhoods. The deficit in these areas ranges from 1 to 5 acres. While implementing new open space lands in the densest part of the community poses challenges, this information will help the City, including the Parks and Recreation Department and Conservation Commission, in deciding where to create new facilities and where to direct open space funding and land acquisition opportunity efforts.

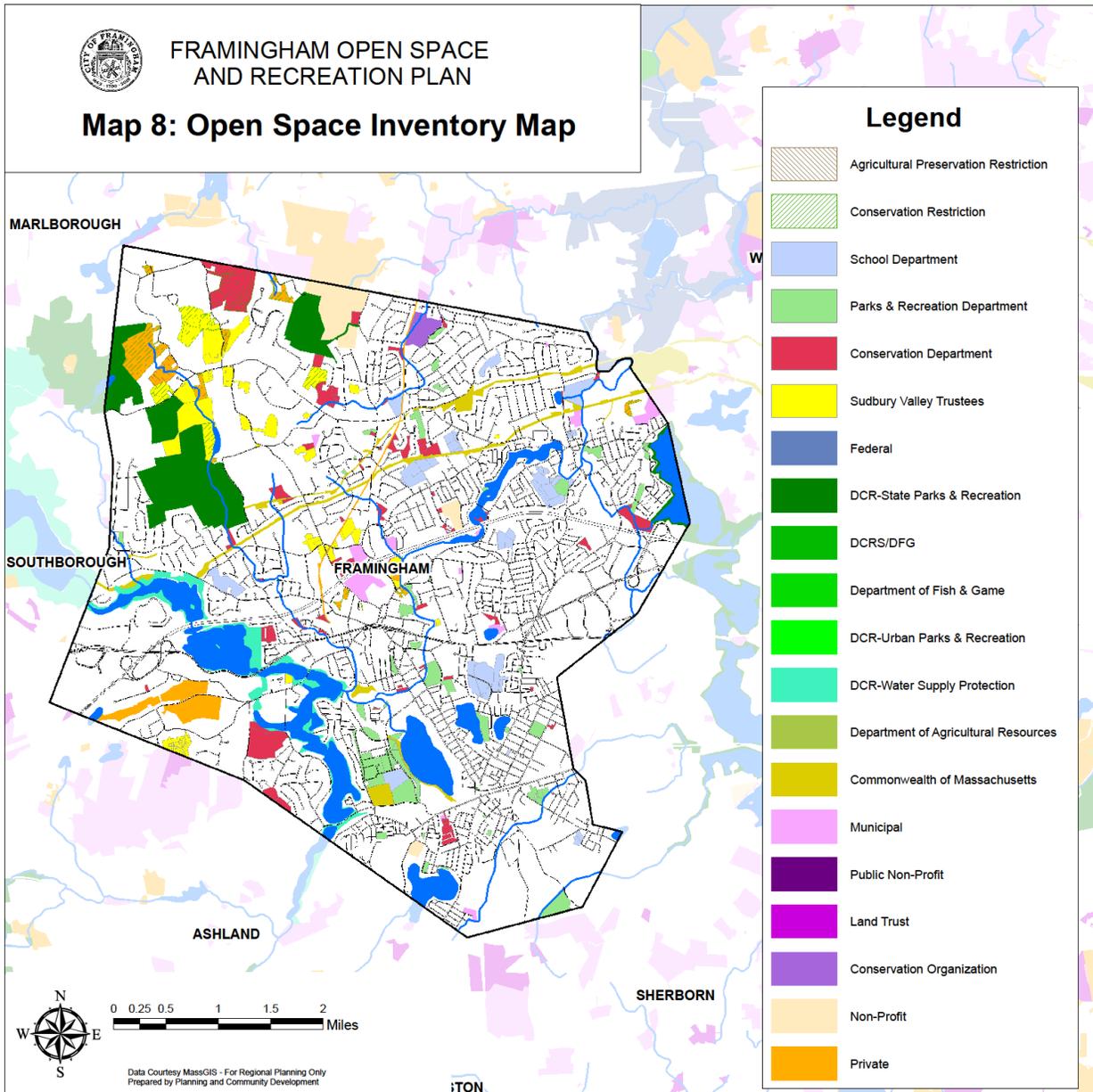
Reaching environmental equity through the expansion of new conservation and recreation facilities where needed most on the south side of Framingham, as noted in this Environmental Equity and Open Space Analysis, is a key goal of the City.

³ It is important to note that the NRPA averages were used merely for comparison purposes in this analysis. Every community has its own open space to person ratios. There are no required numbers.

Table 4-14. Environmental Equity and Open Space Analysis			
Census Tract	Open Space (acres)	Population	Ratio (acres per 1000 pop)
383102	24.1	4923	4.90
383200	33.0	6046	5.46
383101	36.7	4217	8.70
383400	29.0	5540	5.23
383300	232.7	3042	76.50
383501	103.9	4259	24.40
383502	42.2	3773	11.18
384002	170.8	5515	30.97
384001	149.8	1437	104.24
383600	112.5	6138	18.33
383700	139.8	5213	26.82
383800	183.1	5360	34.16
383902	724.1	5227	138.53
383901	684.8	7628	89.77
TOTALS	2,666.5	68,318	

Contains EJ populations/Does not meet NRPA standards of open space for the population

Chapter 5: Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest



A. History of the Community

Overview

Open space can mean a variety of things, but to most, and for the purposes of this Open Space and Recreation Plan, open space refers to conservation, undeveloped, forested, and recreational lands.

This can include wetlands, parks, walking trails, agricultural areas, forests, meadowlands, and other natural areas. Open space provides a range of benefits to community citizens, beyond the benefits that accrue to private landowners. Parks and natural areas can be utilized for recreation; wetlands and forests serve as stormwater drainage and wildlife habitats; farms and forests offer aesthetic benefits to surrounding residents. In rapidly growing urban and suburban areas, any preserved land can offer relief from congestion and other adverse effects of development. In a time of intense development pressures within a community that is already largely built out, protecting (or conserving) open space lands has never been more critical. The environmental and social benefits of such lands are being recognized at an increasing rate, and the need to conserve these lands has become a priority.

Article 97 of the State Constitution provides permanent protection for certain lands acquired for natural resources purposes, meaning “conservation, development, and utilization of the agricultural, mineral, forest, water, air, and other natural resources.” Lands of this nature are often owned by the municipal conservation commission, recreation commission, water department, or by a state or federal conservation agency (i.e., the EOEEA or the Division of Fish & Wildlife). Private, public, and non-profit conservation and recreation lands are also protected under Article 97. Removing the permanent protection status of such lands is extremely difficult, as is evidenced by the following required steps:

- a) The municipal conservation commission or recreation commission must vote that the land in question is surplus to its needs;
- b) The removal of permanent protection status must be approved at a City Council vote and pass by a two-thirds (2/3) vote;
- c) The municipality must file an Environmental Notification Form with the EOEEA’s Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA);
- d) The removal of permanent protection status must be approved by the State Legislature and passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote; and
- e) In the case of land either acquired or developed with grant assistance from the EOEEA’s Division of Conservation Services, the converted land must be replaced with land of equal monetary value and recreational or conservation utility.

In other words, it is intentionally difficult to remove a property’s permanent protection status, allowing it to be developed. Private lands can also be protected in perpetuity through deed restrictions or conservation easements. Municipal lands under active use (schools, city halls, highway department facilities, police/fire facilities, etc.) are not considered permanently protected, nor are private lands that are within the State’s special taxation programs (Chapter 61).

A1. Summary of the Resources

Lands of conservation and recreation interest may be defined as un-built land (e.g., land used for farming and forestry, woodlands and fields used for passive recreation, and woodlands and wetland preserved for wildlife habitat and ecosystem function) as well as land developed for or developable for active recreational use (e.g., soccer fields, beaches, and playgrounds).

- Protected land
 - Open space:
 - State land preserved as open space, water resource protection land, and aqueduct land
 - Framingham Conservation Commission land is protected under Article 97 of the State Constitution
 - City ponds are protected under Article 97 of the State Constitution
 - Framingham Parks and Recreation land is protected under Article 97 of the State Constitution
 - Sudbury Valley Trustees' land protected
 - Agricultural Preservation Restrictions are protected through state law
 - Conservation Restrictions (perpetual deed restrictions)
 - Recreation land:
 - Parks and Recreation land protected by M.G. L. Chapter 45
 - Cemeteries
 - Bicycle and pedestrian corridors
- Unprotected land
 - Open space:
 - Tax title land
 - Chapter 61 and 61A land
 - other private open space
 - other municipal open space
 - Recreation:
 - Chapter 61B
 - Private recreation land

Land Outside Framingham

In addition to the above-noted land, Framingham owns two properties outside the City boundaries in other communities that are not reflected on these maps.

- Morency Woods – 67 Morency Street, Natick. Parcel ID – 39-0000032A (14.45 Acres)
- Danforth Green/Oxbow Land in Wayland – 340A Old Connecticut Path, Wayland. Parcel ID – 42C-017 (2.7 Acres)

A2. Uses of the Resources

Public Access

Public access is afforded on all City Conservation land (although only six (6) have well-developed and maintained trails), City Parks and Recreation land, Callahan State Park land, open portions of the rail trails, open portions of the aqueducts, and Chapter 61B lands. Public access is technically denied on the State Division of Conservation and Recreation reservoirs, the Metropolitan Water Resources Authority aqueducts, and portions of the not-yet-opened rail trails, as well as on private open spaces.

Individual Use

Many residents use open space and active recreation facilities on their own or in small groups during their own free time. Favorite activities include walking, jogging, hiking, using playground equipment, and practicing individual sports.

School Use

Team sports, Field Days, and Special Events take place on the various School Fields.

Framingham Park and Recreation Sponsored Programs

The Park and Recreation Department offers over 300 recreation programs in eighty-four (84) categories throughout the year for a wide range of age groups. Detailed information on these programs is available in flyers, brochures, on the department's web page at www.framinghamrec.com, and in newspaper advertisements. A listing of the current offerings is included in Appendix A.

A3. Accessibility for People with Disabilities

Since 1968, under the 521 CMR Rules and Regulations of the Architectural Access Board (AAB), all new construction and renovation of public facilities have been required to be accessible to people with disabilities (Margolis, Fairbairn). Amendment Article 114 of the Massachusetts Constitution states, "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall solely, by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be the subject to discrimination under any program or activity within the Commonwealth" (Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs – For Our Common Good, V. 2, p. 183). Additionally, in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by the federal government. The ADA revised the Federal ADA Accessibility Guidelines (new ADAAG) in 2010, which includes access standards for outdoor activities (e.g., hiking trails and rail trails). A summary of the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan is included in the Appendices.

Framingham has made significant efforts to improve access for people with disabilities in recent years. In 2006, an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan was completed that identified and outlined access issues that needed to be addressed (see Appendix B). In 2025 the City's ADA Coordinator and

Grant's Manager are finalizing funding to develop a new comprehensive ADA Transition Plan and Self Evaluation. Although significant progress has been made, further accessibility improvements are still necessary to better meet the needs of people with disabilities. The Framingham Disability Commission has been consulted for this plan update. The Disability Commission has provided a letter of support (Chapter 10). The Parks and Recreation Department and Conservation Commission have recently conducted an ADA inventory and compliance analysis of their publicly accessible managed lands. These have also been included in Appendix B.

ADA Compliance

City trails can be steep and often have rough terrain. To make trails ADA-compliant, they would need to be flattened and have almost no rocks or roots present. Paving or ADA compliant boardwalk would have to be placed on the trails to reach the required tread. The trails would have to be at least 36" wide for wheelchairs (doubled for two-way traffic). This is a costly method for even small portions of trails, providing handicapped parking is feasible. Regular maintenance of trails would be needed in order to ensure that no obstacles have fallen in the way.

Additionally, trails cannot have a slope exceeding a 10-percent grade, with a running, gradual slope of 5 percent. DCR has several parks throughout Massachusetts with boardwalks, and most of these places feature accessible trails, which are often state-funded. Pull-off areas for resting every 50ft for a 5-percent grade and 30ft for an 8-10-percent grade are required for ADA compliance on the trails. State employees usually staff these areas with said accessibility for safety purposes.

The accessibility guidelines apply to those trails that are designed and constructed for pedestrian use. These guidelines do not apply to trails primarily designed and built for recreational use by equestrians, mountain bicyclists, snowmobile users, or off-highway vehicle users, even if pedestrians may occasionally use the same trails. However, a multi-use trail specifically designed and designated for hiking and bicycling would be considered a shared-use trail, not a pedestrian trail. The proposed guidelines apply only to trails that "connect to an accessible trail" or "designated trailhead."

While the proposed accessibility guidelines address the exceptional circumstances where designers and operators may not be able to achieve accessibility, they are encouraged to always provide access to the greatest extent possible. Departures from specific accessibility guidelines are permitted for any portion of the trail where compliance would:

- cause substantial harm to cultural, historic, religious, or significant natural features or characteristics;
- substantially alter the nature of the setting or the purpose;
- require construction methods or materials that are prohibited by Federal, State, or local regulations or statutes; and
- not be feasible due to terrain or the prevailing construction practices.

B. Protected Open Space

Protected open space is land set aside and permanently restricted for conservation, agriculture, or passive recreation purposes.

Protected open space includes:

- Predominantly unbuilt parcels protected from development and managed by the Conservation Commission;
- City-owned parcels not intended for sale or development but managed by an organization other than the Conservation Commission; and
- parcels owned by the State or Federal government, quasi-public, and private properties.

Many of these parcels are developed for passive recreation with walking, biking, and skiing trails. Many are preserved as natural open spaces.

Protection is granted in different ways; some of these ways are listed below.

- Article 97 of the Massachusetts State Constitution grants citizens the right to a clean environment and the enjoyment of natural resources on publicly owned land. The article requires that public land acquired for natural resource purposes (Parks and Conservation lands) not be used for other purposes or otherwise disposed of without a two-thirds (2-3) vote of the City Council and of each branch of the legislature. Unfortunately, conversion of land acquired for natural resource purposes to other uses has been sanctioned frequently by towns and the legislature with little examination, debate, or opposition. The protection conferred, therefore, is limited.
- Deed restrictions lend protection to some parcels of land.
- Some land is protected through charitable trusts enforceable by the donor and the Massachusetts Attorney General.

B1. State Open Space

The Commonwealth owns and manages several areas of open space and recreation land in Framingham.

- Callahan State Park (DCR): The largest public property in Framingham is Callahan State Park, managed by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Callahan State Park is an 820-acre day-use area located in northwest Framingham and eastern Marlborough. Callahan has seven miles of marked trails and is used for activities such as fishing, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. Within the park are nearly a hundred (100) acres of open fields, seventy (70) acres of which are currently under an agricultural lease.

- Lake Cochituate: the Saxonville beach portion of the 195-acre North Pond of Lake Cochituate is owned by the State, managed by the Division of Conservation Resources (DCR), and leased to the City of Framingham. Land around the Lake is owned and managed by the DCR.
- Framingham State University land.
- Framingham Reservoirs: the impounded portions of the Sudbury River and the shores of the impoundments are owned by the State and managed by DCR.
- There are three aqueducts in Framingham, owned and managed by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA).
- The Sudbury River is a navigable waterway, and so is under federal jurisdiction. Land along the Sudbury River is also protected open space.

B2. City Conservation Properties

The Conservation Commission manages forty-six (57) properties (a total of 122 parcels) (Table 5-1). This is a combined total of approximately 551 acres. About half of the properties have been delineated and bounded with small markers nailed into trees. Six (6) of the seven (7) primary parcels have well-marked trails. The majority of the properties are not maintained for public use, but are managed for their wildlife habitat value or wetland resource value.

For all the properties listed in Table 5-1, the Conservation Commission serves as both the property owner and property manager. Many of the properties are used for passive recreation, and all are open to the general public.

Table 5-1. Conservation Open Space Parcels

Property Name	Ownership	Current Use	Property Condition	Public Access?	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Level of Protection	Type of grant
Wittenborg Woods Reservation	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-4	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Macomber Reservation	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-4	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	Land & Water
Arthur-Morency Woods	City	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	G	Unknown	N/A
Cochituate Brook Reservation	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	M	Unknown	N/A
Carol Getchell Nature Trail	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Scenic view	R-3	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Cedar Woods	City	Natural needs clean	Fair	Limited	Scenic view	G	Unknown	N/A

Nobscot Park	City	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Grove Street Conservation Parcels	City	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Sudbury River Oxbow Reservation	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Excellent	Unknown	Passive rec.	M	Unknown	N/A
Spring Lane	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Old Wood/Old Worcester Road	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Edmands-Mohawk Property	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Nobscot Spring	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Hemenway Road	City	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-3	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Chickatawbut Road	City	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Hiram Pond	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Very Good	Yes	Scenic view	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Hiram Pond Access	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Fair	Limited	Pub. access	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Hop Brook	City	Natural state	Good	Limited	Scenic view	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Winch Street	City	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Norton Pond	City	Natural state	Good	Yes	Passive rec.	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Bacon Road	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Lyman-McAdams Road	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Scenic view	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Whiting Road	City	Natural state	Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-3	Art. 97	N/A
Lyman-McAdams Road	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Scenic view	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Lamphere Circle	City	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Brook Meadow	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-3	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Woodmere Road	City	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Scenic view	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Brook Street	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-3	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Perry H Henderson Drive	City	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A

Perry H Henderson Drive	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Perry H Henderson Drive	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Florita Drive	City	Natural state	Excellent	View	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Central Street	City	Natural state	Good	No	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Arlene Drive	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Very Good	Yes	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Clearview Drive	City	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Crosby Circle	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Worcester Road	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Scenic view	B	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Sundial Place	City	Natural state	Very Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-3	Unknown	N/A
Lillian Road Extension	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-3	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Sucker Pond	City	Natural state	Good	Limited	Scenic view	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Main Street Cemetery	City	Cemetery	Very Good	Yes	Passive rec.	R-1	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Union Avenue Terrace	City	Natural state	Good	Yes	Passive rec.	G	Unknown	N/A
Circle Drive	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Walnut Street	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A
Mt Wayte	City	Natural needs clean	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Prindiville Avenue	City	Natural state	Good	Yes	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Cronan Park	City	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Bishop Street	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Good	Limited	Passive rec.	G	Unknown	N/A
Travis Drive	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Excellent	Limited	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Flannagan Drive	City	Natural state	Good	Yes	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Goodnow Lane	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Good	Limited	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Worcester Road	Board of Selectmen	Natural state	Good	Limited	Scenic view	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Shortiss Park	Conservation Dept	Natural state	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	R-3	In Perpetuity (Art. 97)	N/A

Central Street	City	Natural state	Fair	Yes	Passive rec.	R-1	Unknown	N/A
Agnes Drive	City	Natural state	Unknown	Unknown	Passive rec.	R-4	Unknown	N/A
Sun Valley Recreation Area	Unknown	Natural state	Unknown	Unknown	Passive rec.	R-3	Unknown	NA
Bates Rd Extension	Board of Selectmen	Natural & ballfield	Excellent	Yes	Passive rec.	M	Unknown	N/A

⁶ <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/accessibile/ADASummFeb00.html>

The Conservation Commission continually monitors the status of available land and pursues land protection strategies.

Stewardship of Framingham’s Conservation Properties

The Conservation Commission maintains an ongoing program to preserve Conservation properties for their ecological and recreational value, with a focus on wildlife habitats.

The Commission initiated comprehensive land management of all its sites with the establishment of a seasonal land management crew in 2014, which was subsequently expanded in 2015. This Crew is tasked with carrying out the administration’s vision of actively managed land, which includes invasive plant removal, trash cleanup, trail maintenance, and general stewardship of public open space.

In 2017, the Commission retained the services of Beals and Thomas to evaluate Conservation-owned land and write a Master Plan for the City’s Conservation Parcels. Some key findings from this 2019 plan included remarking the boundaries of properties, using consistent branding for signage and trails, as well as suggestions for strengthening stewardship of parcels within their surrounding communities.

The Commission has created trail maps of all parcels (six in total) on which it maintains trails, and made these maps available to the public in digital and electronic versions. See Map 10.

The Commission continues to maintain a Stewardship program that has identified 1 to 3 volunteers for 6 of the 7 “primary” (trailed) parcels who are responsible for monitoring their parcels and reporting on problems, needs, and opportunities. The Commission aims to sponsor monthly workdays on various parcels of Conservation land around the City, engaging Stewards and other volunteers in trail maintenance, trash pickup, and trail creation. Residents alert staff or Commission members to any significant issues on a parcel, such as a fallen tree, an invasive species growing, or general comments about the trail or parking areas. The stewards also assist in some of the events that the Commission holds. Currently, staff and commission members are exploring new ways to promote the stewardship program and advertise the primary parcels.

Educational Programs by the Framingham Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission holds various educational events (see Appendix C). These events help Framingham residents understand the crucial role the Commission plays in protecting wetland resource areas. These events include Riverfest, Wildlife Tracking, scavenger hunts, nature walks, and lectures at local educational facilities. Riverfest is an annual event sponsored by the National Park Service and the River Stewardship Council, which brings awareness to the preservation, protection, and enhancement of the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord Rivers within their surrounding communities. The Commission also participates in local events, such as Earth Day, held by the Sierra Club, and Environmental Night at Potter Elementary School. The Conservation Commission is currently establishing partnerships with Mass Audubon and the Appalachian Mountain Club to develop consistent programming run by stewards, which targets a wide range of age groups within the community.

Encroachment Policy

Baseline documentation is used as the primary method to determine boundaries of land in the care of the Conservation Commission. GPS (Global Positioning System), survey plans, GIS maps, and other supporting materials are used to locate property boundaries. When encroachment is noted on Conservation Land, a letter is sent to the appropriate parties to initiate discussions with Conservation Staff and the Commission to identify the best course of action. The overall goal is to achieve compliance and ensure that Conservation Land returns to its natural state; therefore, the best course of action may vary from one property to the next. This process is ongoing and ever-changing.

Invasive Species Management

Invasive species management addresses both upland and aquatic species, encompassing a diverse range of habitats throughout the City.

In the primary parcels of open space, the Conservation stewards and crew will remove non-native species such as oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), wisteria (*Wisteria* spp.), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*). If the plants can be removed safely without the use of mechanical devices, then trail maintenance days are held to remove them from the trail systems. However, if the plants are too large and require removal from vehicles, then the Highway Division of the Department of Public Works assists with those plants from the trails.

Please note that the Framingham Conservation Commission encourages the removal of invasive plant species as part of the wetland permitting process. Applicants will then manage the invasive plant over time and will plant native species, when possible.

Currently, the City of Framingham is a member of a 45-conservation organization collaboration within the Sudbury River watershed known as the Sudbury, Assabet, Concord Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (SuAsCo CISMA). The SuAsCo CISMA works across jurisdictional boundaries within the Sudbury River watershed to manage invasive plants together. The group has a 5-year management plan that identifies project areas, holds several annual meetings, engages members in plant identification workshops, coordinates a small grant program, and seeks funding for larger watershed-wide projects.

DCR Weed Control

The Conservation Commission participates in the Department of Conservation Partnership Grant each year. The Wayland Surface Water Quality Committee attends a Conservation Commission meeting at the beginning of each year to seek permission and support for the Department of Conservation Partnership Grant Program. The program is a collaborative effort among Wayland, Framingham, and Natick to manage invasive aquatic species within Lake Cochituate, allowing the City to hire contractors to perform the work. In addition to this program, the Framingham Conservation Commission manages a contract that is put out to bid for pond maintenance at the local ponds. This occurs annually. Finally, there is a Generic Order of Conditions that permits private property owners on Lake Cochituate to hire contractors to remove invasive aquatic plants from the portions of the lake that they own.

B3. City Ponds and Lakes

The City of Framingham has an abundance of ponds (Table 5-2). The major ponds are Waushakum, Big Farm, Little Farm, Learned, Mohawk, Sucker, Gleason, and Norton. Lake Cochituate’s North Pond is partially within Framingham. Swimming, fishing, and boating are permitted in many of these ponds.

Table 5-2. Ponds and Lakes in Framingham				
Pond Name	Public	Public Uses	Abutter Uses	Acres
Farm Pond Big	Yes	Boating, fishing	N/A	124
Farm Pond Little	No	Fishing	N/A	23
Gleason Pond	Yes	Fishing	Boating, fishing	12
Lake Cochituate	Yes	Boating,	N/A	195
Learned Pond	Yes	Swimming	Boating	34
Mohawk Pond	Yes	Fishing	N/A	2
Norton Pond	Yes	Fishing	Boating, fishing	5
Sucker Pond	No	N/A	N/A	6
Waushakum Pond	Yes	Boating,	Boating, swimming,	82
Property Total	9		Total Acreage	483

B4. City Parks and Recreation Property

Some Park and Recreation Department parcels are natural open space and vital wildlife habitat, and should remain in their current natural condition. These parcels are protected from development only insofar as Article 97 of the State Constitution prohibits disposal without a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the City Council and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the State Legislature. These parcels are listed below in Table 5-3.

The Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages all of the properties listed below in Table 5-3. All of the properties are available for passive recreation and allow for general public access. The parklands were either purchased by the City or donated by generous citizens.

Table 5-3. Parks and Rec. Open Space Parcels									
Property Name	Street Name	Property Condition	Expansion Potential	Zone	Current Use	Type of Grant	Public Access?	Level of Protection (per deed)	Acres
Cushing Memorial	80 Dudley Rd.	Excellent	Yes	R-1	Passive Rec	USH & PARC	Yes	In Perpetuity (P&R G.L.c.45, sec. 14; Art.97)	57.5
Edgell Road	87 Edgell Rd,	Good	No	R-3	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	In Perpetuity (P&R G.L.c.45, sec. 14; Art.97)	6.08
Edgebrook	21 Edgebrook	Very Good	No	R-3	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	6.5
Farm Pond	Dudley Rd.	Excellent	Yes	R-1	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	26.6
Hemenway	Hemenway Rd.	Very Good	No	R-3	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	4.49
Kellogg Street	Kellogg/Prospect	Very Good	No	R-3	Street Island	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	5.35
Lanewood Ave	1 Lanewood Ave	Good	No	R-4	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	5.00
Lyman Road	Lyman Rd	Very Good	No	R-4	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	1.09
McManus Park	Pearl /Thompson	Very Good	No	CB	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	0.21
Merriam Park	74 Dennison	Very Good	Yes	R-1	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	13.3
Nobscot Park	850 Edgell Rd.	Very Good	Yes	R-4	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	In Perpetuity (P&R G.L.c.45, sec. 14; Art.97)	3.2
Old Conn Path	OCP, RR	Good	No	R-1	Street Island	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	4.01
Park Street	2 Park St.	Good	No	CB	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	0.43

Pratt Street	48 Pratt St, RR	Fair	Yes	G	Public Garden	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	1.24
Reardon	Brownlea Rd/14R Foley Dr	Very Good	No	R-1	Playground	N/A	Yes	City Owned Tax Title; Book 48639, Page 218	3.00
Salem	Salem End Rd	Good	No	R-4	Street Island	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	0.11
Simpson Drive	110 Simpson Dr	Good	Yes	R-1	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	1.61
Veterans Park	Concord St.	Very Good	No	G	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	1.00
Walnut Street	105 W Inut St.	Good	No	R-1	Trail	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	6.83
Water Street	Water St	Good	No	R-3	Passive Rec	N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)	11.00
Property Total	20							Total Acreage	149.7

B5. Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) Property

Approximately 390 acres of open space in Framingham are owned by SVT. Some of the land is managed for passive recreation, some for agricultural use, and some for watershed and wildlife habitat protection (Table 5-4). All SVT properties are protected by an implied charitable trust enforceable by the donor and the Massachusetts Attorney General.

Table 5-4. SVT Properties in Framingham

Property Name	Acres	Street Address	Property ID
Baiting Brook/Welch	0.42	862 EDMANDS RD	023-36-6688-000
Baiting Brook/Welch	18.06	0 EDMANDS RD	022-26-6255-000
Baiting Brook/Welch	68.02	862 EDMANDS RD	034-34-7860-000
Baiting Brook/Welch	29.13	0 WINCH ST RR	044-53-1736-000
Brown Woods	10.28	0 WALKUP CIR.	046-03-0253-000
Centennial Place	0.55	0 CENTRAL ST SUDBURY RIVER	050-23-1239-000
Ciampa Woodland	5.01	1016 EDGELL RD	026-26-3495-000
Cockell Island	0.20	0 CENTRAL ST SUDBURY RIVER	059-90-2969-000
Cowassock Woods	0.57	6 SKINNER RD	116-38-9005-000
Cowassock Woods	0.50	7 SKINNER RD	116-38-6070-000
Cowassock Woods	0.50	15 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-6527-000
Cowassock Woods	0.52	14 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-9534-000
Cowassock Woods	0.61	12 WAKEFIELD DR	116-48-0624-000
Cowassock Woods	0.48	5 SKINNER RD	116-38-6038-000
Cowassock Woods	0.47	11 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-6663-000

Cowassock Woods	0.60	4 SKINNER RD	116-38-8156-000
Cowassock Woods	0.49	3 SKINNER RD	116-38-5198-000
Cowassock Woods	0.49	4 WAKEFIELD DR	116-39-9012-000
Cowassock Woods	0.49	30 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-1276-000
Cowassock Woods	0.51	8 SKINNER RD	123-37-9943-000
Cowassock Woods	0.47	6 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-9922-000
Cowassock Woods	0.60	21 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-3523-000
Cowassock Woods	0.68	7 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-6789-000
Cowassock Woods	4.31	0 SALEM END RD	115-28-9506-000
Cowassock Woods	0.58	24 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-4230-000
Cowassock Woods	0.48	27 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-0459-000
Cowassock Woods	0.61	8 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-9841-000
Cowassock Woods	0.58	2 SKINNER RD	116-38-7277-000
Cowassock Woods	0.50	32 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-0259-000
Cowassock Woods	0.51	16 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-8495-000
Cowassock Woods	0.47	17 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-5572-000
Cowassock Woods	0.47	26 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-3254-000
Cowassock Woods	0.48	9 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-6781-000
Cowassock Woods	0.55	5 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-6858-000
Cowassock Woods	0.56	18 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-8326-000
Cowassock Woods	0.46	22 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-5249-000
Cowassock Woods	0.52	28 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-2266-000
Cowassock Woods	0.50	25 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-1563-000
Cowassock Woods	0.89	19 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-4551-000
Cowassock Woods	0.62	10 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-9763-000
Cowassock Woods	2.53	23 WAKEFIELD DR	116-38-3627-000
Ferreira	1.09	303 WATER ST	039-94-5046-000
Gordon's Corner	2.49	175 EDGELL RD	079-46-5603-000
Gordon's Corner	9.86	211 EDGELL RD	079-47-4568-000
Harrington Fields	1.00	748 EDMANDS RD	079-47-4568-000
Harrington Fields	1.37	752 EDMANDS RD	023-56-1919-000
Harrington Fields	4.00	798 EDMANDS RD	023-47-8054-000
Henry's Hill	17.36	0 WAYSIDE INN RD	014-69-4234-000
Henry's Hill	0.84	0 WAYSIDE INN RD	013-58-7240-000
Henry's Hill	3.57	0 WAYSIDE INN RD	013-59-2547-000
Henry's Hill	7.28	0 WAYSIDE INN RD	023-57-1968-000
Henry's Hill	28.01	0 WAYSIDE INN RD	013-58-2718-000
Hop Brook Natural Area	16.48	891 GROVE ST	035-84-0556-000
Howe's Field	7.17	940 GROVE ST	035-64-8733-000
Moore Field	1.68	0 GROVE ST	024-66-0712-000
Overly	18.11	0 EDMANDS RD OFF	022-26-6255-000
Pigor's Land	3.78	0 SALEM END RD	109-91-0814-000

Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	1.80	0 GROVE ST	067-08-5628-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	4.01	0 BELKNAP RD GROVE ST	067-08-6298-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	1.26	125 BELKNAP RD	067-18-3615-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	0.79	111 BELKNAP RD	067-18-4527-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	10.19	37 BELKNAP RD	068-29-0438-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	6.42	412 EDGELL RD	068-29-4064-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	1.04	156 BELKNAP RD	067-08-9447-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	5.70	0 GROVE ST	067-08-1741-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	1.34	59R BELKNAP RD	067-19-7023-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	3.27	289 GROVE ST	067-18-1170-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	2.50	15 SURRO DR	067-09-0051-000
Pike-Haven-Foster Environs	1.63	225 BELKNAP RD	067-08-0515-000
Powers	2.00	264 EDMANDS RD	036-95-9130-000
Rendell	0.78	94 PROSPECT ST NR	091-64-5547-000
Rendell	1.05	94 PROSPECT ST RR	091-64-5734-000
Triangle Meadow	0.71	0 GROVE ST	045-73-4661-000
Waters & Weir	8.24	0 EDMANDS RD	023-57-9079-000
Waters & Weir	1.03	666 EDMANDS RD	023-57-7470-000
Wayside Forest	26.93	0 WAYSIDE INN RD	013-49-5389-000
Wayside Forest	24.52	0 DARTMOUTH DR	013-49-2769-000
Willis	5.29	1115 GROVE ST	024-66-7664-000
Total Acreage	389.86		

B6. Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

The APR program allows the State, City, or combination of the two (2), to purchase the development rights on farmland in order to preserve the land's use for agriculture. The owner is compensated by the difference between the full market value (development value) and the agricultural value (the current use). The only property in Framingham falling under this APR classification is the portion of Hanson's Farm on the west side of Nixon Road. The City has applied in 2025 for APR funding to preserve Eastleigh Farm. The City has also applied for CPC funding for this effort.

B7. Conservation Restrictions

A conservation restriction (CR) permanently protects private property from development. The land remains in the ownership of the landowner, but the "development rights" have been permanently restricted. A CR ensures that land will remain in its predominantly natural condition. Lists of parcels in Framingham with conservation restrictions, conservation restrictions in progress, and deed restrictions follow (Tables 5-5, 5-6, and 5-7).

Table 5-5. Conservation Restrictions (Existing)						
Parcel	Address	Grantor	Grantee	Acres	Approved	Expiration
Aronson-Combs	Wayside Inn Rd., 33	B. Aronson	SVT	6.7		None
Baiting Brook Meadow Farm	Nixon Rd., 32	G. and D.D. Harrington	SVT	80.0	2007	None
Belknap	Belknap Rd., portions of 153, 85, 59, & 37	B Plympton	Con Com	13.9	1973	None
Belknap	Belknap Rd., portion of 289	L Kendal	Con Com	4.3	1973	None
Campanelli/Knox Trail	Dartmouth Dr., 0	Campanelli, Inc.	Con Com	1.2	1979	None
Hilltop Lane	Parmenter Rd., portions of 93, and Hilltop Ln., portion of 7 Edmands Rd., 1101	G. Harrington	Con Com	4.0	1980	None
Overly	Parmenter Rd., portions of 93, and Hilltop Ln., portion of 7 Edmands Rd., 1101	E. Overly	SVT	19.0	2007	None
Riverpath Drive	Birch Rd., wellfield	Riverpath Assoc	Con Com	5.6	2004	None
Shady Lane	Shady Ln., east portions of 4, 6, 8, 10, 12	Creative Housing Co. Inc.	Con Com	0.1	1982	None

Wittenborg Woods	Wayside Inn Rd., 55	City of Framingham	State	62.7	1999	None
Total Acreage				197.5		

Table 5-6. Deed Restrictions (Existing)

Parcel	Address	Grantor	Grantee	Acres	Approved	Expiration
Perry Henderson Dr.	Easterly portions of 14, 16, 18, 20, 22,24, 26, 28, 30, 32,42, 44, 46, 48, 50 Perry Henderson Dr.	National Development Corp.	Con Com	1.8	1983	2013
Legatt-McCall	8 Legatt-McCall Connector	Lambda Ltd. Part.	Con Com	2.7	1994	2024
			Total Acreage	4.5		

Table 5-7. Conservation Restrictions (In-Process)

Parcel	Address	Grantor	Grantee	Acres	Approved	Expiration
Brimstone Lane	Brimstone Ln., portion of 287	Albermarle Realty Corp.	Con Com	21.0		N/A
			Total Acreage	21.0		

C. Protected Active Recreation Land

Active recreation land includes land owned and managed by the Framingham Parks and Recreation Department, as well as several privately owned facilities. This land is protected by the M.G.L. Chapter 45.

C1. Framingham Park and Recreation Property (and School Property)

Approximately 364 acres of recreation land are under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Department, which is protected by M.G.L. Chapter 45. Below is a list of the park and recreation facilities owned by the City of Framingham and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department (Table 5-8). Parks and Recreation properties vary in size, type of facility, and intensity of use. Some are designed to serve nearby residents in surrounding neighborhoods, while others also serve users from other communities.

Many of the recreation properties have been improved and upgraded within the past five (5) years. A 20-Year Capital Improvement Plan is in place for all areas.

An additional eighty (80) acres of athletic fields on school property are owned by the School Department, but maintained and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. The School Department maintains all other areas of the school grounds. Due to the present arrangement, scheduling of events at school facilities and the maintenance of thirty-two (32) school fields are the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department. This arrangement has been very beneficial to both parties.

The Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages all of the properties listed on the following page in Table 5-8. All properties allow general public access. The parklands were either purchased by the City or donated by generous citizens.

The Parks and Recreation Department is also involved in several projects that they hope will soon be added to the list of facilities in Table 5-8:

- Danforth Green – This 88-acre parcel was deeded to the City in 2013. The Parks and Recreation Department is developing a management and use plan for this parcel in collaboration with other City Departments.
- 150 Irving Street – The Parks Department is working on developing a small neighborhood park at this location. While the property has been transferred to the Department, it is our goal to have this park finished in late 2020-early 2021.

Table 5-8. Parks and Recreation Recreational Properties and Associated Facilities

Park Name	Acres	Condition	Expansion Potential	Zone	Current Use									Type of Grant	Public Access?	Level of protection (per deed)	
					Basketball	Beach	Baseball/ Little league	Football	Playground	Softball	Soccer	Tennis	Track				
Anna Murphy Park	3.00	Excellent	No	G			1						1		Marathon	Yes	None (City Owned)
Apple Street Park	0.50	Excellent	Yes	G	1				1						CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned)
Arlington St. Playgrnd	1.80	Excellent	No	G	1				1						CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned)
Bates Road Park	2.60	Excellent	Yes	G	1		1		1	1					Trust	Yes	None (City Owned)
Bowditch Field	18.17	Excellent	No	R-1	1		1	1					4	1	PARC	Yes	In Perpetuity (P&R G.L.c.45, sec. 14; Art.97)
Brackett Road	2.35	Fair	Yes	M											N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Brophy School	5.12	Excellent	No	R-3						2	2	4			Donation	Yes	None (City Owned)
Butterworth Park	10.50	Excellent	Yes	G	1		1	1	1	1	1				CDGB/ Donation	Yes	None (City Owned)
Callahan Senior Center	2.20	Excellent	No	R-1											N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Carter/Keefe Tech	29.40	Excellent	No	R-1			1								N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Danforth St	9.13	Excellent	No	R-1					1	1					CDGB/ Donation	Yes	None (City Owned)
Forest Ave Ext.	0.66	Fair	No	R-1											N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Furber Park	3.78	Excellent	No	R-1			1		1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Gallagher	1.30	Very Good	No	G											N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Juniper Hill	2.59	Fair	No	R-1											N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Keefe Football Field	1.84	Good	No	R-1				1							N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Learned Pd. Beach	1.00	Very Good	No	R-1		1									CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned)
Longs/Ryan Complex	5.59	Excellent	No	R-1	1		1			1					N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Mary Dennison	14.00	Very Good	Yes	M	1		1	1	1	2	1				CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned)
Mason Park	4.70	Good	No	R-1					1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Merchant Road Fields	29.00	Excellent	No	R-4							1				N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Mount Wayte	1.00	Very Good	Yes	R-1					1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Musterfield/ Galvani	9.17	Excellent	No	G						2	2				CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned)
Oakvale Park	3.20	Very Good	Yes	R-3					1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Reardon Park	10.00	Very Good	No	G-1	1		1		1						CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned)
Roosevelt Park	3.80	Excellent	No	PRD	1				1						USH	Yes	None (City Owned)
Saxonville Beach	1.84	Excellent	Yes	R-1		1									CDBG	Yes	None (City Owned Tax Title Book 10275, Page 376)
Temple Street Playgrnd	1.80	Excellent	Yes	R-1					1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Victory Field	6.50	Very Good	Yes	R-3							2				USH	Yes	In Perpetuity (P&R G.L.c.45, sec. 14; Art.97)
Waushakum Beach	1.11	Very Good	Yes	R-3		1			1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Winch Park	11.32	Very Good	No	R-1											N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Winter Street	5.72	Very Good	No	R-1								6			N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Woodfield	7.00	Very Good	Yes	R-3					1						N/A	Yes	None (City Owned)
Total Acreage	209.49				9	3	9	4	15	10	9	15	1				

Table 5-9. School Property

School Property	Total Acres	Athletic Fields Maintained by Parks & Rec. (Acres)	Athletic Fields								
			Basketball	Beach	Baseball	Football	Playground	Softball	Soccer	Tennis	Track
Barbieri	18.48	8.27			1		1		1	2	
Brophy	28.13	5.12	1				1		1		
Cameron	30.75	2.11			1						
Dunning School	23.51	see Walsh			1		1				
Fuller	27.35	2.70							1		
Hemenway	13.67	5.79									
High School	44.41	11.32	1		1	1		2	2	6	
Juniper Hill	16.94	2.59			1		1				
King	13.70	3.53	1					1			
McCarthy	22.63	1.00	1		1		1		1		
Potter Road	12.75	6.71	1		1		1		1		
Walsh/Dunning	12.65	22.16			1		1	1			
Mass Bay	22.00	8.95			1						
TOTAL	294.7	80.25	5	0	9	1	7	4	7	8	0

C2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors

The Rail Trails are on corridors of varying forms of state and municipal ownership and agreement, and so varying degrees of protection.

- The Cochituate Rail Trail (CRT) is a multi-use trail that extends from Saxonville to the intersection of Speen Street and Cochituate Road. The Cochituate Rail Trail follows a stretch of train line that had fallen into disuse. The Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) supplemented an existing DPW project with \$600,000 in grant money to clear and surface the route while also adding amenities. In 2015, a paved, well-marked road dedicated to bicycles and pedestrians opened, stretching across Framingham.
- The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a proposed multi-use trail on a right-of-way that extends thirty (30) miles northward from Route 30 to the junction of Routes 3 and 495. This project has been divided into three (3) phases. Phase I from Rte 495 south to Rte 225 has been completed, Phase II from Rte 225 through Acton, Concord, and Sudbury is in the design phase, and Phase III (the Nobscot right-of-way) from Sudbury to Framingham. Phase III is still in its early stages of development. The City of Framingham acquired the BFT from CSX approximately 3.5 miles

of corridor. The City of Framingham was successful with two MassTrail grants in excess of \$800,000. The City has engaged BETA Engineering for phase I and we are at 25% design of phase I.

- The Bay Circuit Trail is a 200-mile corridor running through fifty (50) cities and towns around Greater Boston. It connects the "jewels" of the "Emerald Necklace." It was first proposed in 1929 as an outer "emerald necklace," linking parks, open spaces, and waterways from Plum Island to Kingston Bay. The Bay Circuit idea, a precursor of today's national greenways movement, continues to take shape.

The City's 2012 Master Plan includes a Bicycle Collector Path system, and in 2015, Framingham's Complete Streets Policy was rated the 9th best nationwide. This policy promotes "the safety and comfort of all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit". The City also established its first-ever Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in 2017 and will seek state funding through the MassDOT Complete Streets program. The City of Framingham is continually working to better serve bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the community by improving the road and trail system.

Bicycle lanes should be incorporated into the City's roadway system wherever possible. This would allow safe travel by residents throughout the community. The process for developing a city-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was initiated in 2013. Staff from the DPW, Planning Board, and Community & Economic Development have teamed up to undertake this endeavor by meeting regularly to share ideas and develop a plan. In September 2014, the City, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), held its Livable Community Workshop and Bike and Pedestrian Plan Kick-off public meeting. Extensive outreach for the event was conducted, and the City was able to gather valuable feedback from the participants who attended. Framingham will continue the process to identify areas lacking bike and pedestrian amenities and create plans for expanding this multi-modal network.

The Dudley Road Multi-Use Path is a recreation pathway around Farm Ponds. The City completed Phase One of the off-street, multi-use path in 2017, which ran from Fountain Street to Harvey Cushing Way. Phase One was funded by a \$400,000 grant from the MassDOT Complete Streets Program. The City received an additional \$400,000 for Phase Two, which will continue along Mount Wayte Avenue, transitioning to on-street buffered bicycle lanes and sidewalks. The bike lanes continue on Union Avenue.

C3. Aqueduct and Reservoir Lands

Framingham is fortunate to be home to a series of public water reservoirs and aqueducts. Improving public access to these resources was a key recommendation of the 2008 Plan, and considerable staff time has been spent since 2009 implementing this recommendation.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation Resources (DCR) manages three public water reservoirs in Framingham – the Foss, Stearns, and Brackett reservoirs. The Foss Reservoir (reservoir #3), north of Route 9, is designated as a standby water resource and could be used in an emergency as a backup supply for the MWRA system's sixty-one (61) communities. Due to contamination associated with the Nyanza superfund site in Ashland, the Stearns reservoir (reservoir #1) and Brackett reservoir (reservoir #2) comprising twelve (12) miles of shore land (the dams are excluded) and 175 acres, are no longer used for public water supply and the state is seeking to divest itself of the ownership and management of these reservoirs and adjoining lands. The City has been involved in discussions with the state regarding the future use and disposition of the Stearns and Brackett reservoirs. In particular, there is an eight (8) acre parcel at 322 Salem End Road that has potential for enhanced recreational use, and public boat access on both sides of the dams will open the entire Sudbury River downstream of Ashland for navigation.

The Metropolitan Water Resources Authority (MWRA) manages three aqueducts that traverse Framingham. The Weston and Hultman Aqueducts parallel each other for approximately 5.1 miles from the Sudbury Reservoir off of Pleasant Street in Southborough to Saxonville and then into Wayland. The Sudbury Aqueduct begins at the Stearns Reservoir on Winter Street and moves in a southeasterly direction for approximately three (3) miles to the Sherborn town line.

In the spring of 2012, the City of Framingham and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) initiated a collaborative project to develop a pedestrian trail along the Weston Aqueduct. Signs were installed at the trail's entrances, and a street crossing was constructed that bisects Elm Street.

Framingham was the first municipality to receive a permit from the MWRA in a program aimed at developing over 40 miles of walking paths along the Sudbury, Weston, Wachusett, and Cochituate Aqueducts. Opened in 2015, Framingham's portion extends approximately five miles from east to west, further integrating bicycles and pedestrians into the City's infrastructure.

The Hultman Aqueduct was taken offline in 2003, and its rehabilitation is underway. When work is completed in 2014, the Hultman Aqueduct and the new MetroWest tunnel can be used interchangeably. If one line needs repair, the other will be activated, resulting in little to no interruption to service. The Hultman will serve as the primary backup to the MetroWest Tunnel system. According to the MWRA staff, the need for the Hultman Aqueduct to serve as the primary backup to the MetroWest tunnel places it in a more restricted category, and improved access for residents is unlikely at the present time.

Given the Hultman Aqueduct's status as a primary backup, the potential use of the Weston and Sudbury Aqueducts has been the City's focus for improved public access. Since 2011, the Parks

Department has collaborated with the MWRA to open over 5 miles of Aqueduct trails City-wide for passive recreational use. Building on this relationship, the City is continuing to work with the MWRA to open additional segments of the Weston and Sudbury Aqueducts in 2021 and 2022. The City will continue to work with MWRA and advocate for aqueduct access, including the Hultman, where feasible, wherever the recreation value is high.

D. Unprotected Open Space

Following is a description of categories (and some lists of parcels) of unprotected open space in Framingham; this is the list of properties from which we will select priorities for protection.

D1. City-Owned Property

The City owns some choice pieces of land that should be evaluated for possible protection through the Conservation Commission and/or Parks and Recreation Department.

D2. City-Owned “Tax Title Land”

The City owns many parcels of land that were acquired due to tax delinquency. This list is ever-changing as new parcels are added and periodically disposed of at auction or transferred to other city departments. Some parcels have value as open space, others have recreational value. All should regularly be vetted for potential public value.

Several parcels have been identified as priorities for acquisition by the Conservation or Parks and Recreation department. Upon further analysis, others may be identified. In 2010, the parcel at 1093 Worcester Road was removed from this list and designated for recreational purposes. The parcel is adjacent to the proposed Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and is being retained by the City for rail trail purposes.

Table 5-10. Tax-Title Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest		
Parcel Number	Parcel Address	Interested Dept.
048-62-6923-000	235 Brook St. RR	Conservation
037-44-3582-000	746 Water St. RR	Conservation
048-63-8399-000	454 Water St. RR	Conservation
089-14-7303-000	1093 Worcester Rd.	Parks and Recreation
84-61-8974	Old Conn Path (Reardon Park)	Parks and Recreation
53-90-1190	0 Parker Rd., off	Conservation
53-90-6648	0 Worcester Rd., off	Conservation
363A-90-95	9999 Florita Dr.	Parks and Recreation
050-32-7466-000	1535 Concord St.	Parks and Recreation
050-32-7445-000	1545 Concord St.	Parks and Recreation

D3. Chapter 61 and 61A Lands

Parcels taxed under the Chapter 61 (Forestry) and Chapter 61A (Agriculture and Horticulture) tax classification are in private ownership and are not protected open space areas. The tax classification enables the land to be taxed at its use value rather than its full fair market value. The City has the right of first refusal if the parcels are sold before the expiration of the tax-abated status. Owners of land classified under Chapters 61 and 61A must notify the City before selling or converting the land to another use.

The City has 120 days to decide whether to exercise the option to purchase the land. This allows the City to protect individual open space parcels as they enter the market or become threatened by development.

Approximately 503 acres of land (a total of 27 parcels) in Framingham are under this tax classification. Parcels taxed under Chapters 61 and 61A are listed below. Note that parcels with Conservation Restrictions are listed separately at the bottom. In addition, approximately forty-one (41) acres (5 parcels) of agricultural/horticultural land are not included in the Chapter 61 or 61A tax classification.

Table 5-11. Parcels taxed under Chapters 61 and 61A

St #	Street	Owner	Acres	Chapter	Parcel Number
131	Kendall Ave	Geoghegan, JH & RC	5.69	61 A (Ag/Hort)	143-53-1124-000
0	Leland St	Geoghegan, JH & RC	0.51	61 A (Ag/Hort)	143-42-9675-000
93	Leland St off	Geoghegan, JH & RC	2.60	61 A (Ag/Hort)	148-41-4635-000
19	Nixon Rd	Hanson, CD & PM	12.09	61 A (Ag/Hort)	421.0-0001-0012.0
0	Edmands Rd	Hanson, CD & PM	4.30	61 A (Ag/Hort)	423.0-0003-0012.D
0	Parmenter Rd	Hundred Acre Wood RT	3.71	61 (Forest)	422.0-0002-0003.J
0	Parmenter Rd	Hundred Acre Wood RT	3.11	61 (Forest)	422.0-0002-0003.K
0	Parmenter Rd	Hundred Acre Wood RT	8.76	61 (Forest)	422.0-0002-0003.L
0	Edmands Rd	Overly, Edith H	6.03	61 A (Ag/Hort)	423.0-0003-0012.B
1084	Grove St	Stephan, Doug	24.00	61 A (Ag/Hort)	431.0-0001-0002.A
1062	Edmands Rd	Stephan, DW,Tr	111.98	61 A (Ag/Hort)	432.0-0001-0016.0
0	Dartmouth Dr	Wayside/Realty Inn	24.52	61 A (Ag/Hort)	686.0-0001-0067.0
0	Wayside Inn	Wayside/Realty Inn	26.93	61 A (Ag/Hort)	686.0-0001-0067.A
1	Edmands Rd	Whittemore, D & S	16.72	61 (Forest)	421.0-0001-0013.0
815	Edmands Rd	Whittemore, D & S	1.00	61 (Forest)	421.0-0001-0016.0
19	Parmenter Rd	Hundred Acre Wood RT	9.64	61 A (Ag/Hort)	422.0-0002-0003.H
80	Nixon Rd	Webster, H & C	17.58	61 A (Ag/Hort)	422.0-0003-0001.0
33	Wayside Inn	Aronson, B	13.60	61 A (Ag/Hort)	422.0-0002-0003.H
1064	Grove St	Leone, M	10.92	61 A (Ag/Hort)	431.0-0001-0002.B
949	Grove St	Deignan, J & L	15.04	61 A (Ag/Hort)	430.0-0001-0009.B
250	Grove St	Bernardi, S & D	13.02	61 A (Ag/Hort)	378.0-0039-0009.0
110	Mill St	Robinson, D & J	27.76	61 A (Ag/Hort)	695.0-0001-0012.0

51	Wayside Inn	Howes, A	10.00	61 A (Ag/Hort)	414.0-0001-0017.0
736	Edmands Rd	Schneider, R & P	14.01	61 A (Ag/Hort)	431.0-0001-0007.0
20	Nixon Rd	Hanson, CD & PM	23.19	61 A (Ag/Hort)	423.0-0003-0008.0
152	Grove St	Robertson, D & R	5.37	61 A (Ag/Hort)	379.0-0039-0020.0
1147	Grove St	Quirk, R D Tr	10.85	61 A (Ag/Hort)	423.0-0003-0014.0
0	Nixon Rd*	Baiting Brook, LLC	44.62	61 A (CR)	423.0-0003-0007.0
32	Nixon Rd*	Baiting Brook, LLC	35.67	61 A (CR)	
		Total Acres	597.95		

D4. Additional/Other Unprotected Private Open Space Over 5 Acres

There are many parcels of private land in Framingham that have significant open space and are not protected from potential development. Below are listed such parcels of five (5) acres or more. Some may have portions or be entirely open space with conservation or recreation value. Of those listed, 21 Edgebrook Road was preserved by a 99-year lease by the Parks and Recreation Department in 2012. The nine (9) Riverpath Associates Ltd. parcels were subject to a Planned Unit Development Permit from the Planning Board in 2013 (Danforth Green). The PUD was completed in 2016/2017, and approximately eighty-eight (88) acres of this site were deeded to the town and permanently preserved for open space use. The two (2) Marist Fathers parcels on Pleasant Street were placed on the market for sale in 2013 and redeveloped for active adult and assisted living in 2018.

The two Hemenway Road properties constitute the local Garden in the Woods horticultural preserve. The Native Plant Trust (formerly the New England Wild Flower Society) developed a comprehensive master plan for Garden in the Woods, its 45-acre native plant botanic garden, founded in 1931. The plan, which will be implemented in phases over approximately 20 years, adopts an ecological approach to managing the site's natural resources in the context of climate change, and then incorporates horticultural, aesthetic, and visitor services goals for the Garden. It includes new and renewed displays, a path system that gives visitors access to more of the property, and new facilities. Current organic management in the Garden will become the foundation for sustainable practices in all aspects of operations.

Table 5-12. Additional Unprotected Private Land Over 5 Ac with Significant Open Space					
St #	Street	Owner	Parcel Number	Acres	Land Use Code
0	Carter Dr	Albemarle Realty Corp	65-70-5952	6.71	Res Dev Land
	Summer St	Anderson Maria A L	73-97-2385	6.19	Priv Tax Ex
60F	Nixon Rd	Aron, Robert L Tr	65-00-8672	5.90	Res Pot Dev
211	Edgell RD	Boudreau, Blair & Perry	73-47-4568	9.86	Priv Tax Ex
863	Central St	Carmelite Sisters For	73-57-1442	22.54	Priv Tax Ex

	Leland St	Century Estates Condo	82-23-9001	6.54	Res Dev Land
77	Bethany Rd	Congregation Of The	72-42-2777	73.40	Priv Tax Ex
0	Pearl St	Consolidated Rail Corp	73-50-1096	13.91	Priv Tax Ex
415	Cochituate Rd	DDR MDT Shoppers	83-66-1011	39.35	Com Pot Dev
91	Leland St	Exelon Framingham, LLC	82-32-5204	15.93	Indly Zoned Pot
40	Winch St	Fafard, Madlyn A &	64-54-8157	21.90	Res Dev Land
261	Edmands Rd	Fram Com Rec Center	74-07-3089	19.22	Priv Tax Ex
3	Western Ave	General Motors Corp	71-99-2449	15.65	Ind Undev Land
80	Wayside Inn	Gibbons, Debra H	65-42-4026	5.75	Res Dev Land
458	Old Conn Path	Gustin, Sarah Trustee	83-48-2856	6.32	Com Dev Land
1400	Edgell Rd	Knox Trail Council, BSA	75-01-2517	10.30	Priv Tax Ex
1300	Edgell Rd	Knox Trail Council, BSA	75-11-7059	42.80	Priv Tax Ex
1294	Edgell Rd	Knox Trail Council, BSA	74-19-6802	96.92	Priv Tax Ex
830	Edgell Rd	Leach Charles E	74-23-5980	10.44	Res Undev Land
505	Pleasant St	Marist Fathers Boston	63-76-1034	7.62	Priv Tax Ex
518	Pleasant St	Marist Fathers Boston	63-75-4400	28.80	Priv Tax Ex
49	Badger Rd	Mass Congregation	62-67-3351	18.10	Priv Tax Ex
1	Badger Rd	Mass Congregation	62-69-5158	44.40	Priv Tax Ex
180	Hemenway Rd	NE Wildflower Soc., Inc.	74-59-7362	31.95	Priv Tax Ex
	Hemenway Rd	NE Wildflower Soc., Inc.	74-59-3884	6.57	Priv Tax Ex
43B	Nixon Rd	Nexum Development	64-39-1805	7.02	Res Dev Land
43C	Nixon Rd	Nexum Development	64-39-1309	10.10	Res Pot Dev
264	Elm St	Novak, William J	84-27-3005	5.31	Res Dev Land
0	Parker Rd	Paul, Linda Tr	53-90-1190	9.38	Res Pot Dev
89	Mt Wayte Rd	Perini Corp.	73-40-9649	8.43	Warehouse
1147	Edmands	Quirk, Robert D	423-3-14	10.84	Multiple Res
1624	Worcester Rd	RDC Water LLC	63-32-7897	6.30	Com Dev Land
0	Worcester Rd	Regan Catherine M	53-90-6648	6.81	Res Undev Land
90	Stearns St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-44-5708	5.82	Res Undev Land
0	Meadow St Ns	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-67-0197	9.80	Res Undev Land
200	Danforth St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-65-5937	10.23	Indly Zoned Pot
160	Meadow St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-45-5042	10.69	Indly Zoned Pot
125	Elm St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-45-5464	12.91	Ind Land: S&G
0	Elm St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-46-4276	13.27	Indly Zoned Pot
0	Meadow St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-56-8338	25.68	Indly Zoned Pot

220	Danforth St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-55-9239	26.26	Ind Land: S&G
0	Elm St	Riverpath Associates Ltd	84-57-5122	28.76	Res Undev Land
1	Fenwick St	Roman Catholic	74-70-4106	22.70	Priv Tax Ex

E. Unprotected Active Recreation Land

E1. Chapter 61B Lands

Parcels taxed under the Chapter 61B (Recreation) tax classification are in private ownership and are not protected. The tax classification enables the lands to be taxed at their use value rather than the full fair market value. The City has the right of first refusal if the parcels are sold prior to the expiration of the tax abated status. Owners of land classified under Chapter 61B must notify the City before selling or converting the land to another use.

The City has 120 days to decide whether to exercise the option to purchase the land. This allows the City to protect individual open space parcels as they enter the market or become threatened by development. Parcels taxed under Chapter 61B are listed below.

Table 5-13. Parcels Taxed under Chapter 61B (Recreational Land)					
St#	Street	Owner	Acres*	Chap	Parcel Number
1037	Edmands Rd	David Maynard	12.3	61 B	423.0-0003-0012.C
16	Gates St	Framingham Country Club	41.82	61 B	456.0-0005-0003.0
0	Parker Rd	Framingham Country Club	0.83	61 B	456.0-0005-0004.0
60	Parker Rd	Framingham Country Club	62.58	61 B	454.0-0004-0018.0
0	Parker Rd, R	Framingham Country Club	29.86	61 B	457.0-0005-0007.0
351	Belknap Rd	Fram Swimming Pool Assoc	6.00	61 B	435.0-0001-0018.F
818	Grove St	Millwood Farms Golf Course	14.38	61 B	435.0-0001-0007.0
	Grove St	Millwood Farms Golf Course	50.62	61 B	435.0-0001-0009.0
110	Mill St	Robinson, D & J	27.76	61 B	695.0-0001-0012.0
0	Pleasant St	Robertson, D & R Secrest	2.16	61 B	379.0-0039-0016.B
95	Wayside Inn Rd	Ruth Snow	13.6	61 B	414.0-0001-0001.0
62	Nixon Rd	Simonelli, J & L Fratalia	4.73	61 B	422.0-0003-0002.D
		Total Acres	266.64		

*Acres in Chapter 61B status

E2. Private Recreation Land

One parcel of this nature, with potential for protection, exists in Framingham: the Framingham Swimming Pool Association owns 7.28 acres of land, much of it undeveloped, at 351 Belknap Rd.

F. Priority Parcels for Protection

F1. Criteria for Protecting Open Space Parcels

The Conservation Commission has a Policy on Accepting Land Donations that informs all discussions about what parcels or types of parcels the Commission would most like to acquire.

- Parcels that have high ecological value, i.e.:
 - Are connected to other protected open space (to serve as an expansion, a link, or a buffer)
 - Are large
 - Have a high-quality wildlife habitat for native species
 - Protect wetlands and water resources
 - Are ecologically unique or diverse
 - They are identified as high value for mitigation towards climate change (flood storage capacity)
- Parcels that have cultural value, i.e.:
 - Are publicly accessible
 - Have an alternative transportation value
 - Offer opportunities for public education
 - Protect water resources
 - Protect scenic vistas or viewsheds
 - Are agriculturally productive
 - Are historically significant
 - Are located in areas with little protected open space
- Parcels that can be appropriately used and maintained
 - Parcels with few invasive, exotic, hazardous, or noxious weeds or materials

F2. Criteria for Protecting Recreation Parcels

The City would like to acquire affordable parcels for recreation that:

- Offer geographic equity of recreational resources
- Require limited preparation for development
- Are readily accessible

F3. Priority Parcels for Acquisition or Protection

Opportunities for acquisition or creative protection come and go and vary from situation to situation. Therefore, priorities will change as fiscal, political, and developmental circumstances change. There are, however, some parcels of such high priority that they are worth setting forth here.

The City successfully obtained a \$500,000 Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation in 2011 to assist in protecting the Eastleigh Farm (Table 5-15; 1062 Edmands Road). Although this amount proved inadequate to secure the property, the City remains committed to continuing its preservation efforts. The property at 1093 Worcester Road (Table 5-16) has been removed from the tax title list and has been set aside for possible use with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. A portion of the Weston Aqueduct (Table 5-18) is open for public use as part of a joint pilot project between the City and the MWRA. Parks and Recreation acquired title to a vacant parcel on Edgebrook Road and is in the process of receiving the transfer of property at 150 Irving Street for a pocket park.

Table 5-14. Large Parcels of High-Quality Private Land

St #	Street	Owner	Parcel Number	Acres	Map10 Code
77	Bethany Rd	Congregation of Sisters	72-42-2777	73.40	1
0	Pearl St	Consolidated Rail Corp	73-50-1096	13.91	2
261	Edmands Rd	Fram Com Rec Center	74-07-3089	19.22	3
3	Western Ave.	RACER, LLC	71-99-2449	15.65	4
1400	Edgell Rd	Knox Trail Council, BSA	75-01-2517	10.30	5
1300	Edgell Rd	Knox Trail Council, BSA	75-11-7059	42.80	6
294	Edgell Rd	Knox Trail Council, BSA	74-19-6802	96.92	7
830	Edgell Rd	Leach Charles E	74-23-5980	10.44	8
874	Edgell Rd	Nobscot Realty TR*	74-24-5231	4.14	9
462	Edgell Rd, off	Nobscot Realty	74-23-7556	3.89	10
505	Pleasant St	Marist Fathers of Boston	63-76-1034	7.62	11
518	Pleasant St	Marist Fathers of Boston	63-75-4400	28.80	12
180	Hemenway Rd	NE Wildflower Preservation	74-59-7362	31.95	13
	Hemenway Rd	NE Wildflower Presev Soc	74-59-3884	6.57	14
0	Eaton Rd.	NE Wildflower Presev Soc	74-69-0925	4.91	15
89	Mt. Wayte Ave	Perini Corp.	73-40-9649	8.43	16
0	Mt. Wayte Ave	Perini Corp.*	73-40-3803	3.15	17
0	Elm St	Fram Con ComCCFram	84-57-5122	28.76	18
567	Salem End Rd	Sons Of Mary	63-61-6262	29.12	19
225	Crossing Blvd	Staples, Inc	53-71-9725	33.55	20
103	Guild Rd	Zani Donald P	71-89-3216	11.23	21
0	Bracket Rd, off	Consolidated Rail Corp*	71-79-8231	4.5	22
65	North St. RR	Donald Askin	286-161-91	4.79	23

Table 5-15. Large Parcels of Ch 61, Ch 61A, and Ch 61B Land					
St #	Street	Owner	Parcel Number	Acres	Map10 Code
16	Gates St	Framingham Country Club	456.0-0005-0003.0	41.82	24
0	Parker Rd	Framingham Country Club	456.0-0005-0004.0	0.83	25
60	Parker Rd	Framingham Country Club	454.0-0004-0018.0	62.58	26
0	Parker Rd, R	Framingham Country Club	457.0-0005-0007.0	29.86	27
818	Grove St	Millwood Farms Golf Course	435.0-0001-0007.0	14.38	28
	Grove St	Millwood Farms Golf Course	435.0-0001-0009.0	50.62	29
95	Wayside Inn R	Ruth Snow	414.0-0001-0001.0	13.6	30
0	Dartmouth Dr	Wayside/Realty Inn, LLC	686.0-0001-0067.0	24.52	31
0	Wayside Inn	Wayside/Realty Inn, LLC	686.0-0001-0067.A	26.93	32
1	Edmands Rd	Whittemore, D & S Hollis	421.0-0001-0013.0	16.72	33
815	Edmands Rd	Whittemore, D&S Hollis Trs	421.0-0001-0016.0	1.00	34
1062	Edmands Rd	Stephan, DW,Tr (Eastleigh)	432.0-0001-0016.0	111.9	35
1084	Grove Street	Stephan, Doug	431.0-0001-0002.A	24.00	36

Table 5-16. Tax-Title Land Of Conservation and Recreation Interest					
St#	Street	Interested Dept	Parcel Number	Acres	Map 10 Code
746	Water St. RR	Conservation	74-53-8438	3.10	37
235	Brook St. RR	Conservation	74-63-2303	8.73	38
410	Water St. RR	Conservation	74-63-8399	3.22	39
1093	Worcester Rd	Parks and Rec	930-09-0024	0.44	40
	Old Conn Path (Reardon Pk)	Parks and Rec	84-61-8974	3.26	41
0	Parker Rd., off	Conservation	53-90-1190	9.38	42
0	Worcester Rd., off	Conservation	53-90-6648	6.81	43

Table 5-17. City Parcels to be Considered for Internal Transfer/Protection					
St #	Street	Owner	Parcel Number	Acres	Map10 Code
	Pamela	City of Framingham	74-53-7758	3.22	44
403	Hemenway Rd	Parks and Recreation	74-69-5228	4.49	45
356	Edgell Rd	City of Framingham	73-28-5119	12.89	46
3	Carlson Rd	Fram Housing Authority	82-35-7083	17.20	47
	Glenn St., off	Natick Village Apart.	82-45-1346	1.89	48

21	Edgebrook Rd	City of Framingham	358-88-0002	5.87	49
9999	Worcester Rd	City of Framingham	211-43-002	2.62	50

Table 5-18. Other Parcels for Protection if/as They Become Available

The Sudbury Aqueduct and the Weston Aqueduct
The Stearns and Brackett Reservoirs Wildlife Preserve

Table 5-19. Conservation Lands with Trails

St #	Street	Property Name	Parcel Number	Acres	Map 10 Code
55	Wayside Inn Rd	Wittenborg Woods	414-1-39	83.73	U
840	Edgell Rd	Nobscot Reservation	371-120-13	1.04	V
619	Old Conn Path	Cochituate Brook Res	312-236-14	26.7	W
81	Little Farm Rd	Carol Getchell	293-184-22	3.20	X
26	Badger Rd	Macomber	447-2-23	57.82	Y
67	Morency St	Morency Woods	65A-1-37	14.5	Z

The Massachusetts Department of Corrections owns and operates the MCI Framingham Women’s Correctional facility on Framingham’s southside. In the past year, they have signaled that they may be surplusing the 60+ acre property in the next several years. There is a fair amount of open space on this parcel that could meet some of the City’s recreation needs, including a possible recreation facility. The City should be proactive about planning for the eventual future use of this parcel.

Chapter 6: Community Vision

The City of Framingham comprises a blend of urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods, resulting in a diverse range of open space and recreation needs and desires. These needs and desires were solicited through a public opinion survey, public forums, public meetings, and personal conversations.

Process

Responses to the citizen survey were collected over a two-month period from April to June 2019. There were 332 responses to the survey (**see Appendix D**). In addition, 33 residents attended a public visioning workshop on May 22, 2019, at the Public Library. The survey and public visioning workshop were advertised thoroughly to the public through social media posts, government channel PSAs, posted flyers, and email blasts. A communications plan was developed prior to outreach, with various channels organized by date and assigned responsibility. Residents from every City Council district

provided input, although nearly three-quarters of the survey responses came from Districts 1 through 5, which comprised areas north of Route 9. Roughly one-quarter of survey respondents who self-identified their location were from South Framingham. Participants in the survey also skewed older than average, with 87% of respondents reporting their age as 35 or older. Only 1.1% of respondents were younger than 25. Therefore, it is essential to note that goals expressed by residents are more representative of populations living in lower-density neighborhoods, who tend to be older, whiter, and higher-income. While the rate of participation in visioning was uneven across the community, many participants called for the equitable distribution of open space and recreation facilities throughout the City, as well as facilities that respond to the needs of all people in the community.

Through this Open Space and Recreation Plan, Framingham shall commit itself to making sure that future planning, development, maintenance, and public education efforts will help:

- Preserve natural ecosystems, corridors, and historic landscapes;
- Provide passive and active recreational opportunities that are accessible to all citizens of Framingham;
- Provide pedestrian opportunities for all citizens of Framingham; and
- Enhance the quality of life, economic health, and sense of community in Framingham.

Vision

Within the goals, two broad categories of goals emerge: those that focus on the user experience and those that focus on the physical state of facilities and the protection of natural resources. The 2020 vision goals are reorganized and further elaborated under two overall themes: Access & Inclusion and Maintenance & Sustainability.

Access & Inclusion – Ensure that open space and recreation facilities are accessible to all who wish to use them and responsive to the diverse needs of all Framingham residents. Residents will have easy access to a diverse range of safe and clean facilities, regardless of age, race, gender, disability, or socioeconomic background. The City recognizes that the ability of residents to appreciate open space and recreation assets depends on many factors that are context sensitive.

Maintenance & Sustainability – The value of open space and recreation opportunities becomes increasingly apparent as undeveloped land in Framingham dwindles, neighborhoods redevelop, and environmental challenges present growing risks to the community. Ecological disruption threatens our open space and recreation assets, while at the same time, these facilities provide essential services.

Chapter 7: Analysis of Needs

This section is a compilation of needs and prioritization of those needs.

A. Selection of What Has Been Accomplished Since the 2013 Plan

Some of the most significant accomplishments from the 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan are listed below.

New Development/Regulations/Implementation

- Redeveloped Butterworth Park through multiple phases, including parking improvements; irrigation installation; playground upgrade; relocation of basketball courts; replacement of bleachers; installation of an interior, accessible pathway; installation of a shade shelter; renovation of the Grant Street entrance to provide an accessible route into the park
- Worked with the Cochituate Rail Trail (CRT) Committee to develop the CRT, which, once completed, will be accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- Completed an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan
- Established an ADA Transition Plan Sub-Committee to oversee and implement recommendations outlined in the Plan
- Updated the Action Plan with the many achievements that have occurred since its creation
- Formed a Public Trails Task Force as recommended in action item 4A1 and specifically mentioned by the OSRC during their presentation to the Board of Selectmen
- Focused on additional properties that need protection as open space, as in action item 3A1
- Investigated funding mechanisms for protection of open space, item 5B1
- Parks and Recreation received a \$500,000 PARC grant in 2014 to install the Children's Grove at Cushing Memorial Park (Cushing Park Phase V of Master Plan Redevelopment)
- Parks and Recreation received multiple CDBG grants for improvements at Butterworth Park
- Parks and Recreation opened up five-plus miles of aqueduct trails for passive recreational usage
- Constructed the City's first Skate Park at Farm Pond Park
- Installation of a rain garden as part of the Skate Park design
- Conservation/GIS Div. completed GIS layers of all parcels of interest referenced in the OSRP (tables 5.1-5.7)
- Parks and Recreation has installed multiple pollinator gardens at various park facilities
- Community & Economic Development has created a GIS layer for the Bruce Freeman and Cochituate rail trails

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- Several departments performed annual reviews of tax title parcels; however, better coordination is still needed
 - Parks and Recreation commenced the construction of a pocket park at 150 Irving Street
 - Created a boat launch along the Sudbury River near 2 School Street. Procured the Edgebrook Property and restored old amenities within the site
 - Flyers have been created and are available at the Conservation Commission office and the City library. Lectures and nature walks have taken place
 - Cochituate Rail Trail - The Town acquired the trail right-of-way. The town secured Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding to complete the CRT in 2014. Construction on the Natick portion from Route 30 in Framingham to Natick Center is underway.
 - The City has received an appraisal to buy the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail right-of-way from CSX. Requests for funds to buy the ROW have been included in various economic stimulus applications. City staff have periodically attended quarterly regional coordination meetings.
 - Parks and Recreation, in cooperation with the Capital Projects and Facilities Department, installed the first public Electric Vehicle Charging Station at Farm Pond Park.
 - Parks and Recreation has completed field and drainage improvements to Furber Fields.
 - Parks and Recreation has completed a redesign of the Waushakum Bath House that focused on accessibility.
 - Parks and Recreation has installed an accessible playground at Furber Park
 - Parks and Recreation completed full renovations of Loring Ice Arena
 - Parks and Recreation installed multiple accessible bleachers at various Parks and School facilities
 - OSRPIWG continued to meet from 2014 to 2020
 - Parks and Recreation, in cooperation with the School Department, redeveloped areas within the upper Walsh softball fields to improve accessibility and provide additional recreational amenities
 - Parks and Recreation has redeveloped the Lower Walsh track and field, which includes drainage improvements, accessibility enhancements, removal of invasive species, and overall field upgrades.
 - The City Council included a vote for the Community Preservation Act on the November Presidential ballot, and it passed by a significant margin in the Fall of 2020.
 - Community and Economic Development secured a \$500,000 LAND grant for Eastleigh Farm in 2011. Although unsuccessful in securing protection at that time, efforts continue
 - Parks and Recreation has installed multiple shade shelters throughout the City.
 - Parks and Recreation has expanded its programming opportunities to include fully inclusive activities.
 - The City has joined the Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative, a partnership facilitated by the National League of Cities.

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- Parks and Recreation, in cooperation with the Framingham High School Athletic Department, created a cross-country trail around Farm Pond Park.
 - DPW, Planning and Community Development, and Parks and Recreation installed a fully accessible recreational pathway along Dudley Road that connects the Dudley Road recreational corridor with Union Ave and the Bowditch Athletic Complex
 - Parks and Recreation, in collaboration with the Capital Project and Facilities Management Department, renovated the entranceway to the Callahan Senior Center to provide safe and accessible access to the facility.
 - Parks and Recreation expanded programming at Cushing Memorial Park, Bowditch Complex, and other citywide park facilities to make them accessible to all residents.
 - Parks and Recreation completed tomb repairs at Old South and Main Street Cemeteries.
 - Parks and Recreation completed roadway improvements at Edwards Cemetery
 - Conservation acquired the Snow Property abutting Wittenborg Woods
 - Conservation placed a CR on 936 Central along the Sudbury River, utilizing Nyanza Funds
 - Conservation worked with SVT in preserving 50 acres off Wayside Inn Rd
 - Parks and Conservation identified the already city-owned property at 150 Irving and created a “pocket park”
 - Conservation completed a CR on 152 Grove and 0 Pleasant St
 - Conservation submitted a LAND grant to acquire 261 Edmands in a CR in collaboration with SVT
 - Hired an ADA coordinator

Maintenance

- Instituted Operations and Maintenance Plan for the Lower Walsh Field Improvements project
- Monitored the quality of water in ponds and treated ponds annually to improve the water clarity and quality.
- Annual weed control and invasive species management programs.
- Establishment of a conservation land area encroachment policy and a notification process for abutters.
- Marked trails on six major conservation parcels; developed and distributed trail maps for each parcel
- Conservation enhanced their land stewardship by establishing a volunteer stewardship program to assist with trail maintenance, as well as creating a seasonal Conservation Crew.
- Replaced roofs on multiple Parks and Recreation facilities.
- Conservation completed its Conservation Master Plan, which assessed Conservation parcels and identified action items for each of its primary parcels.
- Received grant for ADA compliant curb cuts

Education and Outreach

- Parks and Recreation ensures that the events, programs, and services they offer are held in accessible locations. They provide an ADA statement in their public notices.
- Sponsored Salamander Big Night, which First Graders have participated in; approved Eagle Scout Projects along with Carol Getchell, N.T., which students access; hold spring and fall nature programs on conservation land.
- Parks and Recreation staff have held multiple community outreach efforts in support of park development/redevelopment, trail initiatives, and programming expansion.
- Conservation is an ecological partner in the watershed for several initiatives, including invasive plant management, the SuAsCo CISMA, pollinator partnerships, the Sudbury River Stewardship Council, and a Deer Management Working Group.

B. What Remains to be Done from the 2013 Plan

Many of the recommendations from the 2013 Open Space and Recreation Plan are in progress; some are yet to be addressed. The following are some of the most significant ongoing or outstanding recommendations.

Maintenance Projects

- Evaluate Parks and Recreation and Conservation Commission properties for access issues.
- Identify open space parcels under private ownership and continually update the status of each parcel, including the degree of protection, if applicable.

New Development/Regulations/Implementation Projects

- Investigate opportunities for land acquisition and or protection.
- Continue Cushing Memorial Park Parcels B & C in accordance with the Master Plan.
- Continue to develop small neighborhood parks (e.g. 150 Irving Street) and improve/enhance existing parks in several locations. Parks Continue Developing Neighborhood Tot-Lots.
- Pursue a connection from Downtown (near Rt. 126 and Rt. 135) to Farm Pond Park by a pedestrian and bicycle route (e.g. Chris Walsh Trail).
- Look at the possibility of developing a loop trail around Farm Pond.
- Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Develop trails to connect to Framingham State College property, Mount Wayte, Cushing Memorial Park, Farm Pond, and eventually Downtown.
- Develop Historic Trails throughout the City.
- Continue to develop a use and management plan for the 88-acre Danforth Green property.
- Continue to expand the community garden concept to additional areas.

C. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) describes the open space and outdoor recreation policies of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA). The EOEA uses the document to guide expenditures authorized by the legislature. The 2017 SCORP was released in 2017. A series of ten (10) public meetings was held from July through November 2017 by DCS prior to the release of the plan. The SCORP employs a method of determining demand based on the results of a series of surveys conducted among Massachusetts residents, including a phone survey, a youth survey, web-based surveys, and public meetings held throughout the state. They provided multiple forums for residents to voice their wishes for the types of outdoor recreation they would like to see developed and maintained across the state.

Trails and multi-use fields were the two (2) types of facilities that public officials said “require more resources” – 57.9 percent and 49.5 percent, respectively. Other high-ranking activities, in decreasing order of rank, are playgrounds, baseball fields, community gardens, picnic areas, and freshwater swimming areas. The need for more trails, especially those closer to where people live, was most frequently mentioned as a fundamental need across the state. There is also a strong desire for more car-free recreation options. Respondents want more city-wide trail systems, loop trails within long-distance trail networks that can be completed in a shorter amount of time, and urban trails that connect to water bodies. Rail trails are popular, as is making roads more bike-friendly. Water-based recreation was frequently mentioned at the public meetings. Respondents cited a need for increased access to water, whether for swimming or boating.

This Open Space & Recreation Plan for Framingham provides information about the implementation of the SCORP 2017 objectives into fruition. The City continues to implement new recreational opportunities to provide healthy opportunities as well as additional access for underserved populations. The City has been working with neighborhood groups and city residents on park design and the proper utilization of public space, rather than implementing a design from a consultant and pushing it through an approval process. The protection and increase in access to water-based recreation, as well as information about the importance of protection of wastewater resources, as seen in Framingham DPW’s production “Water is Life,” are also significant focuses of the OSRP.

D. Environmental Resource Protection Needs (from Chapter 4)

The primary environmental challenges facing Framingham (and most communities in the region) were discussed at some length in Chapter 4. They are summarized here.

- Wildlife habitat and green corridor fragmentation
- Stormwater management

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- Decreased water quality (groundwater and surface water)
 - Invasive plants and loss of rare and common plants and wildlife habitats
 - Hazardous and toxic waste discharges
 - Litter
 - Sedimentation and Erosion
 - Landfills

E. Community Needs (from Chapter 8)

The primary goals for open space and recreation were gleaned from the residents of Framingham and the professional municipal employees and volunteers on the Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Working Group. They are reiterated here.

- Maintenance and improvement of the current inventory of passive and active recreational facilities.
- Conservation of natural resources and open space to protect water resources, wildlife habitat, horticultural, agricultural, and sylvan opportunities, and passive recreational opportunities
- Creation of corridors for non-motorized passage for recreation and transit, such as expanded pedestrian access to municipal amenities, access to public transportation, and safe, accessible, and walkable recreation areas.
- Creation of new recreational facilities to meet unmet needs
- Other efforts (fiscal, educational, managerial, etc.) that will support open space and recreation goals

Special Groups Needs

These primary goals encompass multiple objectives and suggestions for achieving the overall objectives. By maintaining and improving the current inventory of passive and active recreational facilities, accessibility and user-friendliness will be emphasized. The City will continue to design all new park and recreation amenities in accordance with ADA compliance. Additionally, the Callahan Senior Center will continue to update its programs and services to meet the Center's mission of promoting healthy, successful aging for senior citizens. To date, the most successful activities provided include yoga classes, various trips throughout the year, computer literacy courses, community education sessions, fitness classes, and bingo. The City's Parks and Recreation Department will continue to provide such activities.

F. Boards/ Commission/ Committee Priorities

Based on feedback from the Boards, Commissions, and Committees represented on the OSRPIWG, the following were identified as priorities.

- **Agriculture Commission** – currently inactive, but its mission is to protect agricultural, horticultural, and silvicultural land
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee** – This group was disbanded after the transition to the city, but it has been revived with a mission to develop multi-use trails that link work and recreation destinations, neighborhoods, public transportation, and other areas. Develop supporting facilities such as racks, benches, and rest areas.
- **Planning and Community Development** – improve linkages between open spaces and facilitate planning for long-term trail development.
- **Conservation Commission** – Expand stewardship program and address encroachments onto conservation land.
- **Disabilities Commission** – Collaborate with city departments to ensure that current regulatory standards are consistently implemented in all new construction and maintenance efforts, implement recommendations outlined in the ADA plan, and enhance education and outreach to the disability community about existing accessible facilities.
- **Historic Commission** – Elevate scenic landscapes in their priority for protection, promote scenic roads, and expand historic districts.
- **Planning Board** – Increase incentives for land preservation by adopting an agricultural preservation or transfer of development rights (TDR) by-law.
- **Parks and Recreation Commission** – Focus on maintenance and improvements to existing facilities (See Table 7-1 below); completing management plans for new facilities at 150 Irving Street and Danforth Green, and expanding the City’s community garden network.

Table 7-1. Recreation Facilities in Need of Improvement

Park	Needs Improvements
Bates Road Park	Complete planned community garden as part of CPA
Bowditch	Replace aging light structures at the Football and baseball field, as planned for FY26; replace the aging Tennis Courts.
Butterworth Park	Lighting improvements to the interior of the facility and courts
Cushing Memorial Park	Further master plan; construct a city splash pad
Danforth Park	Full park redesign
Mary Dennison Park	Complete remediation, utility work, and playground construction
Farm Pond Recreation Area	Complete Chris Walsh Trail development, which will include restroom facilities and an amphitheater.
Furber Park	Improve parking along Fairbanks Road
Mason Park	New Playground Equipment & Basketball Court
Mt. Wayte Park	New basketball court
Nobscot Park	Work with ConCom on facility upgrades.

Oakvale Park	New Playground equipment, new backstops
Saxonville Beach	Continue facility improvements
Temple Street Playground	Additional fencing and playground equipment; complete concept design for renovations
Lake Waushakum Beach	Complete renovations identified in facility redesign
Winch Park	New basketball court, playground
Woodfield Park	Undertake Facility Redesign with the intent of redeveloping the park to improve on current amenities and expand offerings.
Victory Field	Irrigation wells

Table 7-2. ADA Issues on Parks & Recreation Properties

Property	Issue
Anna Murphy Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The walkway from the street to the playground's wood-chip surface is made of stone dust. The surface has water damage and is in need of maintenance. 2. The playground surface is made of wood chips, which are not firm or stable. State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302. 3. No accessible route connecting the shade area, water bubbler, tennis court, basketball court, and street. Route to access park amenities is over grass and dirt. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface. 4. No accessible picnic table.
Apple Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Paved walk has cross slopes where it runs next to the playground. Change of level exists where sidewalk meets swing set area and playground area and wood chip surface. Cross slopes measured 9.6%. State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302. 6. No accessible picnic table.
Bates Street Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Sidewalk in area has cross slopes that exceed 2%. Slopes measure 18% up to 20%. 8. Route connecting elements within the park is over grass. 9. Route to playground equipment is over an edging 10. Route in the play area is wood chips. State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302. 11. Sidewalks - State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3. Sidewalks - State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3. 12. Accessible path to get to picnic table does not exist; no accessible picnic table. 13. Swing set woodchips, not grass, with no path.
Butterworth Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Parking lot has fifteen off street parking spaces off of Bishop Street. The accessible parking space does not have a striped access aisle. Parking off road along the Arthur Street side of the park is not paved or marked and no accessible parking is provided along Arthur Street. Framingham Article V Section 9, State 521 CMR Section 23, Federal 2010 Standards Section 208.

	<p>15. Bleachers for softball field is not on accessible route and does not include inclusive accessible seating. State 521 CMR Section 14.2 and 14.2.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 221 and 802. State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302.</p> <p>16. Swing sets and playground equipment is not on accessible route. Route is grass and wood chips. State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302.</p> <p>17. Tennis Courts do not have an accessible route from the parking or sidewalk. State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302.</p>
Cushing Memorial Park	<p>18. Gazebo at the 911 Memorial has a height of seventy-five and one-half (75 ½) inches at the top of the entry. Protruding Object - State 521 CMR Section 20.6.1, Federal 2010 Standards Section 307.2 (204.1).</p> <p>19. Route to picnic tables is not accessible as it is over grass and dirt. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p> <p>20. Gazebo near children’s grove has a step to gain entrance on both sides. State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3.</p> <p>21. Entrances / Route along walkway east of the Chapel do not provide a thirty-six (36) inch opening with a surface that has a change in level.</p> <p>22. Distance from the pole to the rock measures 58 inches wide. The pavement surface measures thirty (30) inches wide. One of the openings to the North South walk measures thirty-two (32) inches wide. The route between the gate pole and wooden fence measures twenty-seven and one-half inches wide. The route closest to Dudley Road between the chain link fence and gate pole measures thirty-six (36) inches wide. State 521 CMR Section 28, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206.</p> <p>23. Entrance from Adjacent property parking lot has a drainage grate with openings greater than ½ inch when measured in the direction of travel. State 521 CMR Section 22.7, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3.</p> <p>24. Route to keyhole garden has stairs with no handrails or accessible route. State 521 CMR Section 27, Federal 2010 Standards Section 210.</p>
Danforth Park	<p>25. One (1) accessible parking space is provided off street with a striped access aisle. No above ground sign is provided. Framingham Article V Section 9, State 521 CMR Section 23 (no jurisdiction with less than 15 off street parking spaces), Federal 2010 Standards Section 208. Route from the sidewalk to the playground equipment is over pavement.</p> <p>26. A change of level exists due to a trench that was dug.</p> <p>27. Path to the softball field is over grass.</p> <p>28. Route to the multiuser piece of equipment has a step at the bottom of the ramp.</p> <p>29. Surface at swing set and State 521 CMR Section 20 & 22, Federal 2010 Standards Section 206 & 302 (accessible route), State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3 (change in level).</p>

Farm Pond Park	<p>30. No accessible parking provided at the stone dust parking lot by the bocce courts. Framingham Article V Section 9; Federal ADA 2010 Standards Section 208.1</p> <p>31. Not enough off street parking to be under the Jurisdiction of 521 CMR Section 23 (under 15)d.</p> <p>32. Accessible route is not provided connecting the items provided in the park. 521 CMR Section 20.2 Federal ADA 2010 Standards Section 206.</p> <p>33. Ramp to Bocce Court slope exceeds 1:12 State 521 CMR Section 24.2.1, Federal 2010 Standards Section 405.2.</p> <p>34. Measurements taken with a two (2) foot smart level were 10.2%, 12.0%, and 13.9%.</p> <p>35. Ramp with handrails needs updates.</p> <p>36. Gravel is worn down so landing isn't level.</p>
Furber Park	<p>37. Route to the shade protection area is disconnected from the paved walk.</p> <p>38. Route between concrete pad and paved walk is over dirt and grass. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p> <p>39. Surfacing old pathway style, sidebar.</p>
Gallagher Park	<p>40. The Park does not have any marked trails or playground equipment.</p> <p>41. Two (2) benches are provided on the park. One is near the sidewalk and the second is by the edge of the Gleason Pond. An accessible route / path is needed. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p> <p>42. Only streetside parking.</p>
Galvani Park	<p>43. The route at the entrance has a change in level. State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3.</p> <p>44. The route to the fields has a paved route near the entrance and building. The route beyond the building to the different fields is over grass and dirt. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p>
Kellogg Street Boat Launch	<p>45. No accessible parking is provided in the parking lot. Framingham Article V Section 9, State 521 CMR Section 23, Federal 2010 Standards Section 208.</p> <p>46. The route is over dirt and other natural debris. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p>
Long's Complex	<p>47. Accessible parking and general parking for this facility is dispersed with a small dirt lot for accessible parking near Carter Field. Other Parking at Farm Pond, Loring Arena, Barbieri School and Keefe Tech is used based on where the game is being held. The dirt parking does not have marked access aisles. The accessible parking at Barbieri School is closest to the entrance to the school and not the route to Long's Baseball complex. Accessible parking is provided at both the front and rear of Loring Arena that is usable to people with disabilities. Framingham Article V Section 9, State 521 CMR Section 23, Federal 2010 Standards Section 208.</p> <p>48. The accessible route at the Long's baseball complex is over dirt and grass. Some of the dirt and gravel paths show pooling of water with sand and</p>

	<p>silt. There is also evidence of pooling of water on the Barbieri School side of the pedestrian bridge. Some of the paths have a pulverized pavement surface with gravel stones and other rocks along the route. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p> <p>49. The pedestrian bridge between Barbieri School and Long’s baseball complex has a change in level that measures 1 ¼ inch on the Long’s Complex end of the bridge.</p> <p>50. The route from the Farm Pond parking area to Carter Field is into the driveway for the accessible parking. The surface is worn and has a change in level where the dirt and gravel meet the paved sidewalk. State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3.</p> <p>51. The bathroom located in the brick concession building provides no access to people with disabilities. The door has an opening that measures twenty-nine (29) inches wide. The toilets, urinals and sinks do not provide the proper maneuvering clearances to approach them or safely use them. State 521 CMR Section 30 (Toilet Room), Federal 2010 Standards Section 213 & 603 (Toilet Room).</p> <p>52. There are two (2) portable toilets provided on the Long’s complex. An accessible unit is located near the bridge to the Barbieri School. A second unit is provided at the rear of Loring Arena that is not accessible to people with disabilities. State 521 CMR Section 30.1.2 (Portable Toilet), Federal 1990 Standards Section 4.22 (Portable Toilet).</p> <p>53. There are bleachers located at the different fields. None of the bleachers are located on an accessible route and accessible seating is not provided in any of the current bleacher seating. State 521 CMR Section 14.2 and 14.2.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 221 and 802.</p> <p>54. The Lower Long’s concession stand measures fifty-one (51) above the ground. The Upper Long’s concession stand measures forty-six (46) inches above the concrete pad. State 521 CMR Section 7.2.1, Federal 2010 Standards Section 904.3.2.</p>
Mason Park	<p>55. The route for the walking public from the sidewalk is down a sloped dirt and gravel driveway. The route from the parking lot to the different play structures is over grass and dirt. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p> <p>56. The stairs do not have handrails. State 521 CMR Section 27, Federal 2010 Standards Section 210.</p>
Oakvale Park	<p>57. The route from the street to the park is down a slope that is greater than a ramp, with no landings or handrails. The surface of the route is dirt, gravel and grass. State 521 CMR Section 24, Federal 2010 Standards Section 405 for ramp. State 521 CMR Section 24.2.1, Federal 2010 Standards Section 405.2 for ramp slope. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p>
Perry Trust Area	<p>58. Surface of the walkway / trail is gravel soil and leaf litter. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface.</p>

Reardon Park	59. Path of travel to the baseball field and basketball court is over grass and dirt. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface
Roosevelt Park	60. Accessible path has 12-inch gap. Woodchips around playground. No accessible picnic table.
Simpson Park	61. No access to the park from Central Street due to the lack of a curb cut. Accessible route is needed to the park. 521 CMR Section 21 Federal 2010 Standards Section 406. 62. The wooden bridge built into the trail has a change in level on both sides. 521 CMR Section 20.10 and 29.2 Federal 2010 Standards Section 303. 63. Wood chips is not an accessible surface. 521 CMR Section 29.1 and Federal ADA 2010 Standards Section 302.1.
Woodfield Sloan Park	64. The route from the streets surrounding the field to access the different amenities is over grass and dirt. State 521 CMR Section (20.8) 29.1 surface, Federal 2010 Standards (403.2) 302.1 surface. 65. The playground equipment has a woodchip surface for the fall zone. The woodchips are kept in a controlled area by a plastic curbing that creates a step to access the equipment. State 521 CMR Section 24.4.2, Federal 2010 Standards Section 302.3
Washaukum Beach	66. Needs handicapped parking with van accessible sign. 67. Slope too steep (8% road, 11% path, 9.8% path). 68. Apply for variance. 69. Gap of grass and concrete paving on route from playground. 70. One bench should be accessible by concrete path. 71. No accessible path to bridge (currently sand). 72. Lip of bridge inaccessible.

G. A Focus on Implementation and Funding

A plan is only effective insofar as it is implemented. Implementation requires leadership, coordination, and, very often, funding.

Based on the 2008 Plan’s recommendation, an Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Working Group was formed to serve alongside Town staff to help oversee the implementation of the 2008 Plan. The Working Group’s responsibilities include periodically reviewing this plan over the course of its life; working with the various departmental (and non-government) leaders to ensure that their actions are being accomplished; and undertaking research that furthers the Plan’s recommendations. The existence of this Working Group also allowed the Town to expeditiously update the 2008 Plan in 2013. The Working Group will continue to meet after completion of the 2020 Plan to discuss and implement recommendations from the new plan.

The OSRPIWG also recognizes the need for new sources of revenue to support initiatives that require additional funding. The following is a list of possible funding mechanisms that should be researched for feasibility.

- Passing a bond for open space protection (like Ipswich, Boxford, and West Newbury)
- Establishing a local land trust that can partner with the City to purchase land (like Bolton)
- Setting aside a small amount of money on a regular basis to build up a land conservation fund that could be used to do appraisals for land purchases or to supplement other money for actual land purchases.
- Placing cell phone towers on city property and dedicating the yearly rental to land protection. This concept was presented to the Town Meeting in the fall 2008 and rejected.
- Establishing quasi-public utilities (electric and/or water), then taking steps to protect land (Littleton's department has worked on protecting critical land crucial to the protection of water resources).
- Operating farm land, then sinking profits back into the land protection fund.
- Passing the CPA is one of the best opportunities for communities to protect important natural spaces, as well as preserve historically significant properties and landscapes, and provide affordable housing (7 of 10 towns surrounding Framingham have passed the CPA).
- Establishing a process for channeling back taxes received due to the sale or transfer of Chapter lands into a revolving land protection fund.
- Aggressively pursuing grant opportunities such as the state Land and Water Conservation Fund and Self-Help grants. A LAND Grant was successfully obtained in 2011 to assist in the preservation of Eastleigh Farm. As the funding was insufficient, this preservation attempt was unsuccessful. A CMAQ grant for \$700,000 was obtained for the CRT in 2010. This grant will allow completion of the CRT.
- Continue to work with non-profit entities such as the Sudbury Valley Trustees on land protection and acquisition issues.

Chapter 8: Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Preserve existing open space and restore developed land in environmentally sensitive areas

Objective 1.1: Identify and acquire priority parcels

Objective 1.2: Improve land protection mechanisms

Goal 2: Expand trail network and connectivity

Objective 2.1: Develop a comprehensive trail system

Objective 2.2: Improve trail infrastructure and maintenance

Objective 2.3: Improve accessibility

Goal 3: Enhance existing parks and recreation facilities

Objective 3.1: Upgrade priority recreation facilities

Objective 3.2: Improve accessibility

Goal 4: Improve administrative practices and coordination across departments

Objective 4.1: Enhance information systems

Objective 4.2: Foster coordination and collaboration

Goal 5: Promote environmental sustainability and equity

Objective 5.1: Enhance Sustainable Transportation

Objective 5.2: Implement Environmental Protection Measures

Objective 5.3: Promote Environmental Education and Outreach

Chapter 9: The Ten-Year Action Plan

A. Introduction

In 2025, the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services (DCS) modified its open space planning requirements to allow communities to prepare ten-year plans, rather than the previously required seven-year plans, to qualify for state grant funding. Consequently, this chapter outlines the ten-year action plan that the Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Working Group believes is necessary to achieve the goals and objectives identified in the previous chapter. This plan must remain an active document, utilized by all relevant departments in their planning and day-to-day operations. This will require dedicated coordination at the departmental staff level, as well as continued oversight and coordination by the Implementation Working Group, which should have broad representation and a clear vision. The implementation Working Group should resume a roughly quarterly meeting schedule to ensure that efforts are being undertaken and well-coordinated. The OSRPIWG should serve as a guiding body that undertakes research and issues recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, and other relevant boards.

B. Full Seven-Year Action Plan (extended to 10 years)

C1. Key to the Lead Municipal Agencies

Acronym	Body Name
Agri. Com	Agricultural Commission
B&PAC	Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
BOH	Board of Health
MAYOR	Mayor's Office / COO
PCD	Planning and Community Development
CC	Conservation Commission
DC	Disability Commission
DPW	Department of Public Works
HC	Historic Commission
HDC	Historic District Commission
P&R	Parks and Recreation Department
PB	Planning Board
TC	Traffic Commission

C2. The Action Plan

Action Item	Responsible Dept.	Funding Source	Proposed completion
GOAL 1: PRESERVE EXISTING OPEN SPACE AND RESTORE DEVELOPED LAND IN ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS			
Objective 1.1: Identify and acquire priority parcels			
1.1.1 Research private land, tax title land, other city land, etc., and identify priority parcels for acquisition and/or protection (based on size, current land use, ecological diversity, presence of rare species, adjacency to protected land, etc.) See Table X	PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.1.2 Work with MDAR, the agricultural commission, the State, and CPC to preserve over 100 acres of farmland at Eastleigh farms	PCD	Staff Time, COC, MDAR, DCR, SVT	2031
1.1.3 Finalize/complete the acquisition of 103 Guild Street, over 30 acres of land in Sherborn and Ashland. MVP Tri City Grant. Connection to Upper Charles Trail/Bay Circuit	PCD	PCD	2025
1.1.4 Work with the developer and SVT to preserve 43-45 Nixon Rd., the second-highest point in Framingham, with future access and connection to the Bay Circuit Trail	PCD	CPC, Staff Time, Mass Trails	2031
1.1.5 Coordinate with Wayland for preservation of Stone's Bridge	PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.1.6 Continue to partner with the state to enhance state-owned property, such as Superintendent's point and the women's prison	MAYOR	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.1.7 Collaborate with SVT, Trustees of Public Lands, and other land protection agencies to support efforts of Garden in the Woods to improve and enhance its grounds by acquiring the Nobscott Reservation	CC, PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.1.8 Remain engaged in the Greater Callahan State Park land protection effort to enlarge the protected open space network near Callahan State Park	CC, PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.1.9 Explore expanding Cushing Park by acquiring additional land	P&R, PCD, MAYOR	Staff Time	2031
1.1.10 Pursue Brownfield clean-up funds for Cedar Woods	PCD, CC	Brownfields Grant	2030
1.1.11 Remain engaged in the effort to manage the Sudbury River Oxbow	CC	CPC	2025-2031 (ongoing)

Objective 1.2: Improve land protection mechanisms			
1.2.1 Research and identify parcels for suggested voluntary addition to Chapter 61 program or Agricultural Preservation Restriction	PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.2.2 Develop a coordinated administrative process for dealing with Chapter 61 land when it becomes available through the right of first refusal (ie. consider adopting the Mt. Grace process)	MAYOR, CC	Staff Time	2030
1.2.3 Develop a recommendation to establish a fund (and a policy) to channel money from Chapter 61 taxes to a fund dedicated to land conservation efforts	Agri. Com	n/a	2030
1.2.4 Ensure currently owned open space and recreation lands are designated and protected under Article 97	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.2.5 Continue to evaluate zoning and other approaches for preserving agricultural lands, including agricultural preservation and transfer of development rights. In particular, work with CPA and land protection agencies (SVT, DCR, Agricultural Commission, etc.)	PCD, CC, Agri. Com	CPA, MDAR	2025-2031 (ongoing)
1.2.6 Develop a coordinated administrative process for review of tax title land prior to it being sold at auction, and undertake an annual review of the tax title list for possible acquisition priorities	MAYOR	Staff Time	2030
1.2.7 Develop a recommendation for the expansion of local historical districts	HC/ HDC	Staff Time	2028
1.2.8 Create an encroachment policy, identify major and minor violations, and begin pursuing compliance	PCD	Staff Time	2028
1.2.9 Ensure private property owners are following regulations, such as wetland conservation under MWPA	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)

Action Item	Responsible Dept.	Funding Source	Proposed completion
GOAL 2: EXPAND TRAIL NETWORK AND CONNECTIVITY			
Objective 2.1: Develop a comprehensive trail system			
2.1.1 Re-establish trails leading to the Framingham schools	P&R, CC	CPC, DCR, Mass Trails, MassDOT, Safe Schools Program	2030 (ongoing)
2.1.2 Complete design and construction of the Carol Gretchell Trail	PCD, P&R	MassTrails, MassDOT, CPC	2026
2.1.3 Complete design and construction of the Chris Walsh Trail	PCD, P&R	MPO/MassDot	2026-2031
2.1.3 Complete the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail: 3.5 miles of construction from the Sudbury town line to downtown Framingham	PCD	MassTrails, MassDOT, CPC	2031
2.1.4 Identify locations for possible new trails, outdoor classrooms, public access points with parking, and camping areas on conservation land. Implement as possible	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
Objective 2.2: Improve trail infrastructure and maintenance			
2.2.1 Research locations for foot bridges over wet spots on trails, so they can be used during wet seasons, like the Walnut Street boardwalk project	CC, P&R, DPW	MVP Grant	2025-2031 (ongoing)
2.2.2 Update signage at P&R facilities and spaces, and add signage to designate all historic districts	P&R, HC, HDC	MWRA	2031
2.2.3 Maintain dead tree branches on trails to ensure pedestrian safety	CC, DPW	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
2.2.4 Create a pollinator garden along the rail trail	CC	CPC	2028
Objective 2.3: Improve accessibility			
2.3.1 Utilize the ADA coordinator while developing new trails or park amenities.	ADA, PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
2.3.2 Develop mass transit connection points at trail heads where feasible (eg. MWRTA bus stops at trail heads)	PCD	MWRA	2025-2031 (ongoing)
2.3.3 Update the City-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan	B&PAC, TC	Staff Time	2026
2.3.4 Work with the NRPA to enact the 10-Minute Walk to a Park Initiative, including an open space analysis of which city areas are deficient in park space	P&R, PCD, CC	CPC, DCR, Mass Trails	2025-2031 (ongoing)

2.3.5 Look into the acquisition of parking adjacent to trails and parks(ie) Simpson Park acquisition of 499 Central Street	PCD, CC, P&R, B&PAC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
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Action Item	Responsible Dept.	Funding Source	Proposed completion
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GOAL 3: ENHANCE EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Objective 3.1: Upgrade priority recreation facilities

3.1.1 Undertake necessary improvements of recreation facilities in need of upgrades, detailed in Table X	P&R	CIP	2025-2031 (ongoing)
3.1.2 Complete design and construction of Walsh-Dunning softball complex, including concessions, storage, lights, fencing, fields, and ADA-access	P&R		
3.1.3 Coordinate across departments to manage both the improvements to Simpson Park and the work being done on Central St. (updating water and sewer mains, roads, sidewalk, granite curbing, and ADA access)	PCD, ADA, DPW, P&R		
3.1.4 Continue to coordinate efforts to manage the Downtown Common with Downtown Framingham Incorporated (DFI)	DPW, P&R	CDGB Funds	2025-2031 (ongoing)
3.1.5 Work with NEMBA to make Callahan State Park more mountain-biker-friendly	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
3.1.6 Continuously monitor priority locations/areas for new recreation facilities (consider: multi-use neighborhood fields/parks, basketball courts, tot lots, parks, river and pond and lake access/boat launches, softball fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, an amphitheater, facilities for elderly residents. There is also interest in a multi-sport indoor recreation facility.	P&R, ADA	CIP	2025-2031 (ongoing)

Objective 3.2: Improve accessibility

3.2.1 Upgrade the existing open space and recreation facilities in Table 7-2 to ensure that they meet ADA and AAB regulations where feasible	ADA, DC	MOD, DC, CPA	2025-2031 (ongoing)
3.2.2 Identify locations for ADA-accessible rest-stations along all trails and open spaces	ADA	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
3.2.3 Complete the construction of an ADA-accessible dock at Waushakum beach.,	P&R, PCD, ADA, DC		2025-2026 (ongoing)

Action Item	Responsible Dept.	Funding Source	Proposed completion
GOAL 4: IMPROVE ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND COORDINATION ACROSS DEPARTMENTS			
Objective 4.1: Enhance information systems			
4.1.1 Develop a comprehensive and consistent set of GIS maps of open space and lists of facilities owned/managed by the City, including identification of handicapped access. Post maps, lists, FAQs, and other educational/promotional materials on the website	P&R, CC, DPW	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.1.2 Continue to use the City's GIS technology to keep up-to-date lists of parcels managed by the Parks & Recreation and Conservation Departments	DPW, P&R, CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.1.3 Ensure the routine updating of inventories of Conservation land and Parks & Recreation land, coordinating with the Assessor's Office	CC, P&R	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.1.4 Develop a better system to track the status of priority parcels so that the City is in a better position to respond to pending sales	PCD	Staff Time	2031
Objective 4.2: Foster coordination and collaboration			
4.2.1 Bring city departments together to identify land management needs, then develop a recommendation for the Mayor for a coordinated program for addressing the maintenance of city-owned land	MAYOR	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.2.2 Consolidate resources within the City relating to open space and recreation facility maintenance	MAYOR	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.2.3 Encourage Eagle Scouts, community service students, and other volunteers to undertake conservation projects	MAYOR	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.2.4 Expand the development of stewardship groups such as "Adopt-a-Park," "Adopt-a-CC Parcel," "Adopt-a-River," "Adopt-a-Tree," and "Adopt-a-Trail" programs	CC	Staff Time, CDGB Funds	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.2.5 Continue routine staff meeting to discuss and coordinate implementation of this plan	MAYOR, CC, P&R	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.2.6 Collaborate with Keep Framingham Beautiful (KFB) and other community organizations to preserve the character of open space areas	MAYOR	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
4.2.7 Research the list of possible funding mechanisms for this Action Plan and develop a report recommending funding strategies for Framingham	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)

Action Item	Responsible Dept.	Funding Source	Proposed completion
GOAL 5: PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY			
Objective 5.1: Implement Environmental Protection Measures			
5.1.1 Incorporate nature-based solutions for restoration, particularly in South Framingham	MAYOR, PCD, P&R, CC	MVP Funds	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.1.2 Move the Farm Pond Leaf Transfer Site to a new open space for city composting to alleviate excess phosphorus levels and dangerous queuing along Dudley Rd.	DPW, P&R	MVP Funds	2031
5.1.3 Support DCR in their efforts to address species infestations in Lake Cochituate	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.1.4 Continue the City's pond-management program	CC, BOH	n/a	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.1.5 Continue to maintain the City's MS4 systems, as regulated by the Clean Air and Water Act	DPW, BOH, CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.1.6 Continue to expand the tree-planting program	CC	CDGB Funds	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.1.7 Adopt some of the healthy soils practices from The Healthy Soils Guide	CC, PCD	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.1.8 Continue implementing community gardens at Bates Road Park	P&R	CPA	2030
5.1.9 Complete community garden study Phase II	P&R	CPA	2030
Objective 5.1: Promote Environmental Education and Outreach			
5.2.1 Assess residents' usage patterns and preferences regarding community trails and develop a targeted outreach plan	PCD, P&R	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.2.2 Increase and diversify channels of general public education through outreach efforts such as: - Development and distribution of flyers - Initiation of cable TV programming - Lectures - Nature walks - The city webpage - Storyboard signs	MAYOR, PCD, P&R, CC, HC, HDC, PB	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.2.3 Undertake stonewall preservation and scenic road education through the City newsletter or public hearings	HC, PB	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.2.4 Work with Framingham Fire Department to help educate property owners with forested lands about wildfire prevention	CC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)

5.2.5 Revitalize 'Living with Wetlands' Brochures to educate property owners about wetland importance and protection	P&R, CC, DPW	Staff Time	2027
5.2.6 Review the list of scenic roads and undertake scenic road marking and outreach to address tree preservation	CC, PB	Staff Time	2030
5.2.7 Continue to adapt existing programs for "youth at risk," "disabled," "senior citizens," and "underserved" populations	P&R, ADA, DC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)
5.2.8 Develop historic landscapes as historic districts	HC, hDC	Staff Time	2025-2031 (ongoing)