

# OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

## *Introduction*

The Town is fortunate to contain substantial Open Space and Recreational resources. The importance of protecting and properly maintaining these resources cannot be overstated, and are equally as important to a community as housing and employment opportunities, commerce, and education. Open space and recreation areas preserve the quality and quantities of our water supply, protect our homes from flooding, and provide wildlife habitat and opportunities for healthy outdoor activities.

Within this Element of the Master Plan, information regarding the types, locations, and sizes of public and private open space and recreation areas is found. Also discussed are proposed goals and objectives that will help ensure our open space and recreation resources are protected and maintained as the Town continues to face rapid development pressures and the impacts of sprawl. A complete list of the Franklin's open space and recreation areas can be found in Appendix OS&R: Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Lands.

While Franklin has experienced substantial development since the last Master Plan was completed in 1997, there still exists significant areas of open space, rural character, and relatively compact development (at least in the older developed areas), as well as a historic Town Center.

Below are excerpts from the Town of Franklin's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). To view the plan in its entirety, see the following link:

[http://town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA\\_Planning/2008plan](http://town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA_Planning/2008plan) or view a hard copy at the Town of Franklin's Public Library, or the Department of Planning & Community Development.

## ***Prior Open Space Protection Efforts***

Efforts to manage, acquire, plan for, or otherwise protect open spaces has been undertaken in Franklin for many years. Some of the Town's more significant open space and recreation planning initiatives are summarized below.

Preparation of Open Space and Recreation Plans: Franklin prepared its first individual Open Space and Recreation Plan in 1985, which was overseen by the Franklin Conservation Commission. The Plan indicated that protection of groundwater and open spaces was a high priority policy issue. Furthermore, the development of additional parks and the acquisition of conservation lands were cited as important capital projects.

1987 Open Space/Affordable Housing Plan: In October 1986, representatives of Bellingham, Blackstone, and Franklin organized the Tri-Town Open Space Committee, whose mission was to advocate for the expansion and linkage of open space resources in the three Towns. In addition, as the rapid development of the mid-1980's threatened both open space and affordable housing in the area, the group recognized that linking the two issues could potentially result in more financially and politically feasible methods to preserve open space while serving the public need to increase affordable housing.

In 1987, the Tri-Town Open Space Committee received a State Strategic Planning Grant which was used to accomplish two objectives; study the feasibility of open space/affordable housing programs and formalize its organization by incorporating itself as a private non-profit community land trust.

The first objective involved inventorying the major undeveloped parcels in each Town, identifying sites suitable for an open space/affordable housing project, preparing concept development plans for each of the sites selected, and preparing a detailed pro forma analysis for one site in each Town. For the second objective, the Committee researched existing community land trusts, drafted a set of bylaws for a regional land trust to serve the three Towns, and developed an implementation strategy/action plan to promote open space and affordable housing. This project, completed in June 1988, led to the establishment of the Metacomet Land Trust shortly thereafter.

Adoption of Zoning Bylaws to Encourage Open Space Preservation: In 1987 the Town of Franklin took a large step toward encouraging open space preservation by creating a cluster development bylaw. Franklin did this as the development of subdivisions increased in Franklin during the 1980's and the Town realized the significance of preserving open space areas for the health and well-being of its growing population. The Open Space Development Bylaw (Section 185-43 of Franklin's Zoning Bylaw) encourages development which is designed to accommodate a site's physical characteristics and provide land for recreation while promoting a variety of single-family residential housing patterns.<sup>15</sup>

Franklin's Open Space Development Bylaw applies to parcels in the Rural Residential I and II, and Residential VI Zoning Districts. This allows developments to retain the same density as existing zoning would permit, but also allowing lots to be reduced in size and located on only a portion of a parcel so that the remainder can be made conservation land. These lots are allowed half the area, frontage, and yard requirements that are mandated by the underlying district. At least 25% of the parcel area must be preserved as open space and either conveyed to the Town or have recorded a restriction enforceable by the Town, mandating that the land remain as open space. By 1993, ten subdivisions had been approved for development in this manner, resulting in the preservation of 236.57-acres of open space. Today 18 open space subdivisions have now been constructed, preserving a great deal of significant wetlands, wooded areas, and open space in Town.

1997 Master Plan: During development of the 1997 Master Plan, a variety of goals, objectives and actions were proposed that would ensure preservation of substantial open space resources, management of resources, and provide access to the Town's open spaces. In addition, the Plan also included creative zoning bylaws such as the Transfer of Development Rights Bylaw, and Density Bonuses for providing open space.

2008 Open Space & Recreation Plan: In the fall of 2007, the Franklin Public Land Use Committee was given the task of overseeing and preparing an update to the 2002 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). While the 2002 Plan was prepared for Franklin as well as two other communities, Bellingham and Blackstone, and addressed the region as well as each community, the 2008 OSRP document addressed only the open space and recreation issues and resources relevant to the Town of Franklin.

Assisted by Franklin's Department of Planning and Community Development staff, the Public Land Use Committee assessed the Town's open space preservation and recreation needs; gathered input from residents regarding personal priorities, desires, and perceived needs; developed the OSRP's goals, objectives, and five-year action plan; and reviewed and edited draft versions of the OSRP. In addition, an evaluation of the accessibility of the Town's open space and recreation facilities was conducted, and an inventory of the Town's open space, recreation, and conservation properties and descriptions of the Town's substantial resources was compiled and updated.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid

The OSRP included numerous goals and proposed actions that determined there is a desire to develop additional passive recreation areas within the Town and to improve existing recreational facilities. Specifically, Franklin's residents wished for the Town to provide new bike trails, obtain and increase management of conservation lands, and provide community-based areas such as dog parks, swimming pools, and community gardening areas. Since the plan was enacted, a dog park (Franklin Dog Park at Dacey Community Field) and a community garden (King Street Memorial Community Garden) have been created and other resources are being developed at DelCarte Conservation Property on Pleasant Street, and the former Town pool property off Panther Way.

The open space and recreation planning process resulted in four main goals with related objectives and a five-year action plan that outlined specific tasks to meet the Town's open space and recreation goals. In general, the goals of the community were to obtain (as needed), improve, and make fully accessible the proper balance of active and passive recreational and conservation resources while maintaining the community as a suburban center with a rural quality.

In early 2010, the Public Land Use Committee worked to update the 5-year Action Plan to describe the next seven years of open space and recreation activities for the Town of Franklin. In late February, the revised plan was accepted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, allowing Franklin to participate in Department of Conservation Services (DCS) grant rounds through February 16, 2016.

Inventory of Open Space and Recreation Lands: Open space is a term that describes public and private conservation, recreation, forest and agricultural lands, parks and greenways, and lands owned by groups with a conservation interest. Some recreation lands with active recreational uses such as playing fields, tennis and basketball courts, or passive recreational uses like hiking or walking and nature study areas, are also classified as open space.<sup>16</sup>

Open space and recreation properties are categorized in Franklin as either publicly or privately owned, and protected or unprotected areas. The Town of Franklin contains over 4,000-acres of public and private open space and recreation areas, a substantial amount of which is open to the public. Some lands are permanently protected by a conservation restriction, historic restriction, or wetland restriction. The Town has nearly 800-acres of Town-owned, permanently protected conservation lands. The Town has well over 1,000-acres of permanently protected recreational open space lands, including nine recreation parks, all of which are handicap accessible.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Federal Government own substantial permanently protected recreational open space in Franklin. Franklin State Forest is 98.37 acres of permanently protected public open space owned and operated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Federal Government owns over 400-acres of permanently protected public open space that is used primarily for water conservation and flood plain control. This land, while publicly owned by the Federal Government, is not open for the public to utilize.

There are several non-profit organizations that have ownership of open space and recreation areas in Franklin. The Hockomock YMCA is a non-profit organization that owns several areas used for playing-fields. This organization is a private entity, meaning that lands owned by this organization are not available for public use without a membership. The Metacomet Land Trust, a non-profit organization allows the public to use their lands for hiking and non-motorized biking.

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<sup>16</sup>Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services. 2008 Open Space Planner's Workbook.

There are many acres of privately-owned recreation and open space lands. Several private recreation areas including the Adirondack Club and lands at the Franklin Rod and Gun Club are active recreation areas but not open to the public without a membership.

Some lands such as Chapter 61 (forestry), 61A (agriculture/horticulture) and 61B (recreation) lands, which are private lands currently used for private recreation or agricultural uses, have a semi-protected status. These lands are described in greater detail in the next section.

Below are detailed descriptions of the lands of conservation and recreation interest in the Town of Franklin. The inventory of the Town's recreation lands includes public, non-profit and private properties (see Map NCH-6: Cultural & Historic Resources). Some of these parcels are already protected open space with conservation restrictions, or are recreation properties. Other parcels identified are sites that may be favorable for the Town to consider for future acquisition or protection. Parcels included in this section have been divided into either public or private recreation lands:

**Private Lands:**

1. Private recreation areas;
2. Lands under special taxation programs, Chapter 61 (forestry), 61A (agriculture), or 61B (recreation); and
3. Other non-protected, private parcels.

**Public Lands:**

1. Town-owned conservation and recreation resources;
2. Non-profit lands; and
3. Federal and State owned lands.

## ***Private Lands***

### **Private Recreation Areas**

There are close to 600-acres of private recreation areas in Franklin, some of which are detailed in Table OSR-1: Private Recreation Areas. This list includes private recreation areas in Franklin that require a membership, dues or enrollment in a program for use and are not free for use by the public. A complete list is found in Appendix OS&R: Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Lands.

**Table OSR-1: Private Recreation Areas<sup>17</sup>**

Property Name	Street Address	Parcel Size (Acres)	Current Use(s)
Franklin Country Club	672 E. Central St.	120.71	Golf Course, clubhouse, pool
Maplegate Country Club	Maple Gate	133.48	Golf Course, clubhouse
Camp Haiastan of the Armenian	Summer St.	98.05	Armenian family camping, cabins
Franklin Rod & Gun Club	Florence St.	2.39	Beach, picnic area, fishing area
Adirondack Club	800 Chestnut St.	9.90	Tennis courts, ADA compliant playground, 3 indoor/outdoor pools, weight room
Franklin YMCA	4 Forge Hill Rd.	7.80	Private/non-profit : Indoor pool, outdoor pool, in/outdoor basketball, tennis courts, playground, weight room, indoor track, skateboard facility, summer camp programs
Franklin Country Day Camp	Partridge St.	120.71	Day camp, pool, fields, indoor pavilion
Boston Sports Club	750 Union St.	8.9	Fitness club, weight room, basketball court, racquetball court, indoor pool, volleyball court, tennis court
Dean College Fields	Maple St.	67.13	Private non-profit educational uses: football field, soccer fields, baseball field, softball field, concession facility

Source: Town of Franklin Recreation Department

**Chapter 61, Chapter 61A & Chapter 61B Lands**

Parcels taxed under the Chapter 61 (Forestry), Chapter 61A (Agriculture), and Chapter 61B (Recreation) tax classification are in private ownership and are not protected open space areas. The tax classification enables the lands to be taxed at their use value rather than their full, fair market value. The Town 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 Chapters 61, 61A, and 61B must notify the Town before selling or converting the land to another use. The Town has 120 days to decide whether to exercise the option to purchase the land. This allows the Town to protect individual open space parcels as they enter the market or become threatened by development. There are over 1,200-acres of land in Franklin under the Chapter 61, Chapter 61A and Chapter 61B tax classification (see Table OSR-2). Parcels taxed under Chapter 61/61A/61B are listed in Appendix OS&R: Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Lands

**Table OSR-2: Chapter 61, Chapter 61A & Chapter 61B Lands**

Street Address	Acres of Chapter Lands
Total Acres Chapter 61 Land	29.70
Total Acres Chapter 61A Land	701.28
Total Acres Chapter 61B Land	542.69
<b>Total Chapter 61, 61A &amp; 61B lands</b>	<b>1,273.67</b>

Source: Town of Franklin Assessor's Records

Some of the larger Chapter 61/61A/61B parcels include over 182-acres of land at the Franklin Country Day Camp, and nearly 115-acres of land at the Schmidt Farm. These lands and other large parcels currently classified as Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands would be of interest for future protection should they become available for sale.

<sup>17</sup> Public and Private Recreation Sites in Franklin. Made available by Ryan Jette, Director, Franklin Recreation Department.

## **Other Private Parcels**

In addition to the private lands classified above, there is a significant amount of privately owned open space property not classified in any of the categories discussed above. For purposes of this plan, these parcels are privately-owned unprotected parcels, of approximately 10-acres or more containing no structures.

The impact of development is potentially detrimental to the visual character of the landscape should these large parcels be sold for a purpose other than conservation. Parcels such as these are of potential interest to the Town for future acquisition to ensure they remain in their current state.

## ***Public and Non-Profit Parcels***

The Town of Franklin owns and operates numerous open space and recreation parcels. These parcels are essential to the vitality of the Town as they offer residents a variety of recreational opportunities, ranging from swimming areas and playgrounds to forest lands for hiking and passive recreation.

In addition, Franklin contains hundreds of acres of tax-exempt property. These parcels include non-profit organizations, private recreation land and major institutional holdings. Tax-exempt parcels are privately-owned and in most cases are not protected open spaces. Some of these lands are publicly owned but not publicly accessible, such as the 434-acres of protected public lands owned by the Federal government, of which nearly 100% are used for water resource protection and flood plain control.

Below is a summary of these resources; a complete list is found in Appendix OS&R: Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Lands.

## **Town-Owned Park and Recreation Areas**

The Town of Franklin owns and manages several park and recreation areas. These areas present Franklin residents with the opportunity to exercise, play sports, be out in nature, some having playgrounds that give children areas to socialize, exercise, and overcome challenges. Below is a summary of the playgrounds and fields in Franklin.

King Street Memorial Park: The 29-plus-acre park at King and Forest Streets has a baseball field, soccer field, football field, and basketball courts, as well as exercise stations, 2 bocce courts, a bathroom, concession facility, and an ADA compliant playground. The playground was renovated in 2005 with two new structures and a glide board. One structure is designed for 5 to 12 year olds and a smaller one for 2 to 5 year olds. Also within the park is King Street Memorial Community Garden which was completed in the spring of 2011. The garden includes 46 individually leased raised beds, each approximately 2' high, 4' wide and 10' long. Allocation of these beds is done via lottery and the gardeners pay a fee to use the garden each season.

Dacey Community Field: At 95-plus-acres, Dacey Community Field is the largest Town of Franklin park property. It has one large soccer field, two small soccer fields, a baseball field, softball field, disc golf course, playground, a dog park, as well as a large multi-purpose (football, lacrosse, soccer) field. At the lower section of the field is access to some nature trails that are great for hiking. Dacey Community Field's playground was updated and made handicap accessible in 2007 and was designed for children 2 to 12 years old with special needs in mind. It is 77' X 92', making it one of the largest ADA accessible playgrounds in the State of Massachusetts. Within Dacey Field is the Franklin Dog Park, a 1/4-acre enclosed dog park with many trees where dogs can run around off their leashes. Dogs must be licensed, vaccinated, healthy, and wear their collar and ID tag at all times. The dog park is open during daylight hours.

**Table OSR-3: Town-Owned Park and Recreation Areas<sup>18</sup>**

Property Name	Street Address	Parcel Size (Acres)	Current Use(s)
Fletcher Field	Peck Street	13.20	2 small baseball fields, senior baseball field, basketball courts, ADA-compliant playground, bathrooms, concession facility
King Street Memorial Park	740 King Street (Forest Street)	29.28	Baseball field, soccer field, football field, basketball courts, ADA-compliant playground, exercise stations, 2 bocce courts, bathroom and concession facility
King Street Memorial Community Garden	At King Street Memorial Park		Community garden with 46 raised beds, individually leased, allocated via lottery
Dacey Community Field	Lincoln Street At Dacey Community Field	95.65	ADA-compliant playground equipment for 2-12 years old, baseball field, softball field, 1 large soccer field, 2 small soccer fields, 18 hole disc golf course, walking trails
Franklin Dog Park			1/4-acre fenced-in dog park
Beaver Pond Recreation Area	Beaver Street	28.91	Artificial grass turf field for soccer/football/lacrosse, bleachers
Chilson Beach	At Beaver Pond Recreation Area		Beach, bath house, concession stand, picnic tables, hibachis, boat launch area, swim dock, soccer fields
Vendetti Playground	At Chilson Beach		ADA-compliant playground (2-5 years)
Faenza Park (Nason Street Playground)	Nason Street	0.54	ADA-compliant playground (2-5 years), picnic area
Pisani Field	Peck Street	3.65	Small lighted softball field, senior lighted softball field, 2 batting cages, concession stand, restrooms
Meadowlark Lane Complex	Meadowlark Lane	2.50	Small baseball field, soccer fields, concession facility
Veteran's Memorial Park*	Panther Way	3.03	Indoor ice skating/hockey

\*Veteran's Memorial Park Skating rink is State owned; however, the Town of Franklin has a small park at this site.

**Faenza Park (Nason Street Tot Lot):** Faenza Park, previously known as the Nason Street Tot Lot, was renovated in 2003 into a new ADA compliant Tot Lot for 2 to 5 year olds. There is a small picnic area adjacent to the playground.

**Fletcher Field:** The 13-plus acre park located a couple of blocks south of Downtown Franklin near Peck and Wachusett Streets offers the neighborhood and general community substantial recreational facilities. Fletcher Field has two small baseball fields, one senior baseball field, basketball courts, bathroom, concession facility, and an ADA-compliant playground. There are some benches and picnic areas adjacent to the playground. Fletcher Field's playground was renovated in 2004 and features separate areas designed to meet the challenges of two separate age groups (2 to 5 and 5 to 12 year olds).

**Beaver Pond Recreation Area:** The 29-acre recreation area is on Beaver Street at Beaver Pond, adjacent to over 60-acres of Franklin Water Department property. It contains an artificial grass turf field used for soccer, football, and lacrosse. Within the recreation area is Chilson Beach, which contains the Joseph and Mary Vendetti Playground, a public beach, concession stand, picnic tables, hibachis, a bath house, boat launch area, swim dock, and soccer fields. Vendetti Playground, updated in 2005, is an ADA compliant tot lot for children ages 2 to 5 years old.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## Proposed Recreation Areas

Currently under construction in Franklin are two additional park and recreation areas. A sculpture park at the old Town Pool site on Panther Way is under construction with a proposed completion date of November 2013. The site features walking trails for the public, with locations where local artists can display their work. Yet to be formally named, a park and recreation area at the DelCarte Conservation Area is also under construction. The park, which is scheduled to be complete in November of 2013, will be the gateway to more than 100-acres of land with multiple bodies of water managed by the Conservation Commission. Educational signage has been included within the parks design which was inspired by the surrounding environment. Site amenities include: tables, chairs and benches made from logs, a rock climbing station, a tree trunk slide and playground area, and swing set.



**DelCarte Conservation Area – Pleasant Street**  
Photo by: Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident, 2012

## Franklin Public School Recreation Areas

The Town has 9 school properties that contain playgrounds and fields for public use, as well as a new high school that is planned to replace the old one with an estimated occupancy date of August 2014. All school playgrounds are ADA compliant. In addition to the Town owned and operated school properties, the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School is located in Franklin and is situated on nearly 60-acres of land that includes playing fields. Table OSR-4: Town of Franklin-Owned Public Schools with Recreation Areas summarizes the parcel size and location of Franklin Public Schools. The schools listed contain fields and playgrounds that are not permanently protected areas.



**Table OSR-4: Town of Franklin-Owned Public Schools with Recreation Areas**

Property Name	Street Address	Parcel Size (Acres)
Parmenter School	235 Wachusett	20.49
Davis Thayer School	137 West Central Street	3.48
JFK Elementary School	551 Pond Street	15.30
Oak Street School	224 Oak Street, Part of High School	35.02
Horace Mann School	224 Oak Street	35.03
Franklin High School	218 Oak Street	71.90
Keller-Sullivan Middle School/Elementary	500 Lincoln Street	14.56
Remington Jefferson School	628 Washington Street	47.03

**Protected Public Open Space**

There are nearly 2,000-acres of Town and State owned land reserved for uses such as hiking, biking, passive recreation and areas of significant water resource protection and flood plain control. The Town of Franklin owns just under 800-acres of protected conservation and open space lands. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts owns 785-acres of protected land, of which just under 767-acres are the State Forest. Metacomet Land Trust, a non-profit conservation organization that is dedicated to the protection of open space and natural resources, owns approximately 48-acres of protected public open space. Table OSR-5 details some of the more significant protected public open space parcels, a complete list is found in Appendix OS&R: Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Lands.

**Table OSR-5: Protected Public Open Space**

Property Name	Street Address	Property Owner	Parcel Size (Acres)	Current Use(s)
Town Forest	Summer Street	Town of Franklin	98.37	Hiking, biking trails
DelCarte Property	Pleasant Street	Town of Franklin	104.94	Hiking, passive recreation
State Forest	Beaver, Grove, South Street	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	758.58	Hiking, biking trails
Flood Plain and Water Resource Protection	Various	United States of America	434.57	Flood plain control and water resource conservation.
Southern New England Trunkline Trail	West Central Street	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	11.41	Hiking/ biking trails
Bridle Path	Bridle Path	Metacomet Land Trust	35.69	Hiking trails
Nature Classroom	Coronation Drive	Metacomet Land Trust	1.76	Outdoor nature classroom
Trails	Maple Street	Metacomet Land Trust	10.50	Hiking trails

Source: Town of Franklin Assessor's Records and GIS information

## ***Regional Efforts***

Franklin remains active in keeping up-to-date on the open space and recreation planning initiatives of the surrounding communities. Through local communications, the Town is able to find ways in which it can partner with other communities to provide even greater recreation opportunities to Franklin's residents.

Currently, Franklin is partnering with the neighboring community of Medway to provide shared sporting activities to the residents of both Franklin and Medway. The Charles River is another resource of regional importance; it should be noted that much of the Franklin side of the Charles is protected open space. Area residents are able to enjoy kayaking, canoeing, hiking, and passive recreation.

Another of Franklin's regional resources is the SNETT trail, a 22-mile trail that originates in Franklin near the Franklin State Forest at Grove Street and passes through Bellingham, Millville, Uxbridge, and Blackstone, to the Douglas State Forest. Local hikers can also enjoy the Franklin Town Forest, Indian Rock, and Dacey Community Field. For more information regarding the SNETT Trail, visit The Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee (FBRTC) website at: <http://www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org/>.

The FBRTC is a "volunteer advocacy group dedicated to the development, maintenance, and financial support of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail as a multi-use, universally accessible recreational path. FBRTC is a subsidiary of the Grand Trunk Trail Blazers, a recognized 501(c)(3), working in partnership with federal, state and local governments, members of the FBRTC are committed to exploring all private, state and federal funding avenues to implement all necessary design plans.<sup>19</sup> The Committee meets regularly to discuss the progress of trail development and is continually looking for funding opportunities to move the project forward.

## ***Goals and Objectives***

**Policy Statement:** Open space and recreational resources are a key contributor to the quality of life in Franklin and an important aspect of the community's appeal. Open lands help protect the Town's water supply, manage flood waters, provide wildlife habitat, and provide opportunities for passive and active outdoor recreation within the Town.

Franklin recently created an Open Space and Recreation Plan which was adopted in 2008 by the Commonwealth. This plan helped the Open Space and Recreation Sub-committee form the goals and objectives found herein.

**Goal 1:** Document the Town's open space and recreational resources, and improve public awareness of these resources and the recreational opportunities they provide to residents through increased education, signage, publicity and events.

Objective 1.1: Create and maintain an inventory of all publically and privately owned open space and recreational resources in Franklin, including, but not limited to: parks, walking/hiking trails, bike paths, water bodies, and conservation land.

Objective 1.2: Increase public awareness of open space and recreational resources.

Objective 1.3: Create and implement a Master Sign Plan for the installation of signage identifying the Town's open space and recreation resources, and providing information related to the appropriate use of the property and its acquisition by the Town, as appropriate.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org/> "Home and Mission"

Objective 1.4: Provide outdoor classrooms, continuing education, and volunteer opportunities for residents to learn about the environment and natural habitats in Town.

**Goal 2:** Preserve and enhance existing unprotected natural and open space resources in Franklin.  
Please refer to Goal 2 of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Objective 2.1: Prioritize open space and recreation resources for acquisition.

Objective 2.2: Protect important ecological resources in Franklin, including surface and groundwater resources, plant communities, and wildlife habitat.

Objective 2.3: Implement growth management techniques to further the Town's interest in preserving natural and open space resources.

Objective 2.4: Work with owners of unprotected open space parcels to protect their land in perpetuity.

**Goal 3:** Provide opportunities for passive and active recreation to meet the community's evolving needs.

Objective 3.1: Maximize existing recreation resources in Franklin and provide new recreation opportunities for residents of all ages and levels of ability.

Objective 3.2: Regularly evaluate existing recreational resources and expand or adjust recreational offerings as appropriate to ensure that the Town's evolving needs for passive and active recreational opportunities are continually met through an inclusive, diverse, and cost-effective recreation program.

Objective 3.3: Improve access to and ensure the availability of sufficient off-street parking for Franklin's water resources and hiking, biking, and walking trails, including but not limited to the DelCarte Property, the SNETT Trail, and the State Forest Trail.

Objective 3.4: Provide a public park or playground within a comfortable walking distance of every neighborhood in Franklin.

Objective 3.5: Increase connectivity to and between Franklin's recreation areas, conservation areas, and open space, by creating corridors for wildlife and recreational uses.

**Goal 4:** Implement sustainable practices in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of Franklin's public parks and playgrounds.

Objective 4.1: Establish sustainability guidelines for park design, including the use of renewable energy sources, recycled materials, native/low water use plants, and permeable surfaces to improve ground water recharge, reduce erosion, and filter out pollutants before they reach a water source.

Objective 4.2: Incorporate shade trees in the design of parks and playgrounds and plant additional trees to meet the need for shaded areas.

Objective 4.3: Expand and improve recycling operations in parks and playgrounds and at special events in parks.

**Goal 5:** Implement the goals, objectives and actions outlined within Section 9, Revised 5 Year Action Plan of the Town of Franklin's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan. (See Appendix OS&R: Section 9 Open Space & Recreation Plan: Revised 5-year Action Plan)

**Goal 6:** Work to obtain the funding and other resources necessary to implement the open space and recreation goals, objectives and actions outlined above.

- Objective 6.1: Promote the adoption of the Community Preservation Act as a means of funding for open space acquisitions and park development.
- Objective 6.2: Pursue the Green Communities designation under the Massachusetts Green Communities Act.
- Objective 6.3: Investigate grant programs and submit related grant proposals in support of the above mentioned open space and recreation goals, objectives and actions.
- Objective 6.4: Investigate potential partnerships with local nonprofit and educational organizations, and businesses.