

Bridgewater

Open Space and Recreation Plan

2009



Lake Nippenicket on a Cold Fall Afternoon

Bridgewater Open Space Committee
and the
Old Colony Planning Council
70 School Street
Brockton, Massachusetts 02301
May, 2009

Old Colony Planning Council

OCPC OFFICERS

President	Jeanmarie Kent Joyce
Secretary	Lee Hartmann
Treasurer	Robert Moran

COMMUNITY

DELEGATE

ALTERNATE

ABINGTON	A. Stanley Littlefield	Robert Wing
AVON	Frank Staffier	Charles Marinelli
BRIDGEWATER	Anthony P. Anacki	
BROCKTON	Robert G. Moran, Jr.	Preston Huckabee
EAST BRIDGEWATER	Richard O'Flaherty	
EASTON	Jeanmarie Kent Joyce	Steve Donahue
HALIFAX	John G. Mather	Troy E. Garron
HANSON	Robert Overholtzer	Phillip Lindquist
KINGSTON	Paul Basler	
PEMBROKE	Gerard Dempsey	Brian Van Riper
PLYMOUTH	Lee Hartmann	Valerie Massard
PLYMPTON	John Rantuccio	James Mulcahy
STOUGHTON	Joseph Landolfi	Robert E. Kuver
WEST BRIDGEWATER	Eldon F. Moreira	Nancy Bresciani
WHITMAN	Fred Gilmetti	Daniel Salvucci
DELEGATE-AT-LARGE	Matthew Striggles	

OCPC STAFF

Pasquale Ciaramella	Executive Director
Lila Burgess	Ombudsman Program Director
Caleb Cornock	Transportation Intern
Jed Cornock	Transportation Planner
Hazel Gauley	Assistant Ombudsman Director
Elise Gifford	Transportation Intern
Raymond Guarino	Transportation Planner
Patrick Hamilton	AAA Administrator
Bruce G. Hughes	Economic Development/ Community Planner
Charles Kilmer	Transportation Program Manager
Jane E. Linhares	Grants Monitor/ Secretary
Janet McGinty	Fiscal Officer
Susan McGrath	GIS Coordinator
William McNulty	Transportation Planner
Anne Nicholas	Ombudsman Program Assistant
Norman Sorgman	Assistant Ombudsman Director
Jacqueline Surette	Fiscal Consultant
James R. Watson	Comprehensive Planning Supervisor
Karen Winger	Transportation Planner

Foreword

This Bridgewater Open Space and Recreation Plan was prepared by the following staff of the Old Colony Planning Council under the direction of Pasquale Ciaramella, Executive Director:

Susan McGrath, GIS Coordinator

James R. Watson, Comprehensive Planning Supervisor

It drew on the 2005 draft Open Space Plan by the Town's Transportation Coordinator David M. Matton and on valuable assistance from the Open Space Committee and many towns Boards, Departments and staff including the Board of Assessors, Planning Board, Water Department, Conservation Commission, and Recreation Commission, and the Master Plan Implementation Committee and on volunteer groups including the Park Stewards, and the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater, with particularly invaluable help and guidance from the Trust's founder, Katherine Doherty.

The Committee looks forward to continuing collaboration with these groups and with the Community Preservation Committee which is expected to be a crucial source of needed funds.

We thank the following participants in the Open Space Photography contest whose photographs appear throughout the plan:

Laura Campbell

Leslie Dorr

Laurie Hartrey

Peter Murray

Joseph Pita

Anne Swarce

The Plan was financed by the Town, by the Taunton River Watershed Campaign with a grant from the Sheehan Family Foundation, by the Community Preservation Committee, and by State Chapter 43D Expedited Permitting Program's District Local Technical Assistance funds from the Old Colony Planning Council.



The Future - A young Person "Enjoying Nature"

Photo by Anne Swarce

Table of Contents	Page
Foreword	i
I. Plan Summary	I-1
II Introduction	II-1
A. Statement of Purpose	II-1
B. Planning Process and Public Participation	II-1
III Community Setting	III-1
A. Regional Context	III-1
B. History	III-3
C. Population Characteristics	III-8
D. Growth and Development	III-16
IV Environmental Inventory and Analysis	IV-1
A. Geology, Soils and Topography	IV-1
B. Landscape Character	IV-3
C. Water Resources	IV-8
D. Vegetation, Rare and Endangered Species	IV-19
E. Fisheries and Wildlife, Rare and Endangered Species	IV-23
F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments	IV-29
G. Environmental Problems	IV-31
V Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest	V-1
A. Unprotected Private Holdings	V-2
B. Protected Public and Non-Profit Parcels	V-8
C. Partially Protected Land Held for other purposes	V-29
D. Minimally Protected Town Holdings	V-34
E. Public and Private Recreation Facilities	V-42
F. Land Under Conservation Restrictions (CRs)	V-64
G. Unprotected or Minimally Protected Private Lands of Interest	V-65
VI Community Vision and Goals	
A. Process	VI-1
B. Vision	VI-1
C. Goals Statement	VI-1
VII Analysis of Needs	VII-1
A. Resource Protection Needs	VII-1
B. Community Needs	VII-1
C. Management Needs	VII-12
VIII Community Goals and Objectives	VIII-1
A. Agriculture Related	VIII-1
B. Open Space Related	VIII-2
C. Water Related	VIII-6

D. Smart Growth Related	VIII-7
E. Habitat Related	VIII-8
F. Recreation Related	VIII-9
G. Open Space Committee / Implementation Related	VIII-11
IX Five Year Action Plan	IX -1
X Public Comments	X-1
XI References	XI-1

Appendices

- Appendix A. Lands in Current Use Taxation, Committee Survey of Chapter 61, 61A and 61B properties
- Appendix B. Areas Potentially Affected by the Above Goals and Objectives and the FiveYear Action Plan
- Appendix C. Handicapped Access Self Evaluations Conservation done, Recreation to come

Figure	List of Figures	Page
III-1. Locus Map		II-4
III-2. Historic Resources		III-7
III-3. Median Age		III-12
III-4. Ethnicity		III-13
III-5. Per Capita Income		III-14
III-6. Environmental Justice Tracts		III-15
III-7. Land Use		III-21
III-8. 1995 & 2005 Bike Route, Lane and Trail Proposals		III-25

III-9. Sewerage Coverage	III-31
III-10. Zoning	III-39
IV-1. General Soil Map Units	IV-5
IV-2. Flood Zone and Land Use	IV-14
IV-3. Water Resources	IV-21
IV-4. Natural Communities and Primary Forest	IV-24
IV-5. Natural Feature and Protected Lands	IV-33
IV-6. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments	IV-39
V-1. Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest	V-69
IX-1. Five Year Action Program	IX-9

I. Summary

As described in the following Introduction and elsewhere, this 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan was prepared under the guidance of the Open Space Committee, and draws on prior Open Space Plans and Master Plans, on the work of consultant Katherine Doherty, on the 2005 preliminary Open Space Plan submission by Town Transportation Coordinator David M. Matton, and on the Management Plans for the major riverside holdings prepared by the Audubon Extension Service and other consultants and given to the town by the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater

As required by the Guidelines of the Division of Conservation Services, the Plan updates social and environmental data describing the town, examines influences on present growth and development trends, inventories existing protected conservation and recreation areas and facilities and other protected lands and, more importantly, identifies remaining lands of “Conservation and Recreation Interest.” It then examines community goals and needs, and recommends actions to save key resources. Finally, the plan summarizes near-term actions in the Five Year Action Program and reviews handicapped access issues.

The Plan finds that Bridgewater’s major resources include:

- The all encompassing Town River/Matfield River/Taunton River system tying the town together and connecting it to adjacent communities
- The combination of large peripheral Ch. 61 holdings and smaller scattered holdings within and between neighborhoods
- The Town’s remaining agricultural heritage and landscape including some major privately-owned areas now out of production which are along the Taunton River and adjacent to state agricultural holdings
- The present open space and recreational holdings
- Holdings of the Bridgewater Correctional Complex protected under Article 97 of the state Constitution
- The town’s good water resources
- Lake Nippenicket, Carver’s Pond, Skeeter Mill Pond (Flynn’s Pond) and the other water bodies.

Major factors in lost open space and threatened loss of opportunities are:

- Continuing large-lot residential develop with one-acre lots required in the extensive Res. A/B District

- Growth reflecting good highway and commuter rail access and the town's varied amenities
- In limited areas, development made possible by sewerage
- Loss of agriculture to increased land values, diminishing profitability, and zoning which allows intensive non-residential uses on some farmland.

Given these pressures, the purpose of this plan is not to flatly restrict development and growth, but to identify and preserve the specific areas which should be saved due to their value to the community, the ecosystem, and the future needs of the town.

Significant remaining opportunities include:

- Areas in the less-developed parts of town where pockets of open space remain which that could be saved and made permanent neighborhood features giving most residents nearby access to protected open space
- The extensive stream system, with protected major holdings like the Tuckerwood Conservation Area, and the intervening potential holdings and connections including construction of a footbridge from the Town River Landing to the Stiles and Hart Conservation Area.
- Remaining farmland and land with the potential for cultivation
- Lands under Chapter 61, 61A and 61B generally.

Primary recommendations for action in the next five years or implicit in previous discussions are:

Land Use/Agricultural/ Environmental Quality

- Explore means to preserve major remaining agricultural holdings using tools such as Conservation Restrictions, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, Community Preservation Act funds, and other state resources such as the Farm Viability and Environmental Enhancement programs
- Work with the Planning Board and the Master Plan Implementation Committee to examine the zoning bylaw for possible revisions protecting agricultural land and key landscapes
- Support establishment of an Agricultural Commission to work for adaptation and preservation of local agriculture

- Identify upstream wastewater treatment plant discharges and other activities affecting water quality and flows in the Matfield, Satucket and Taunton Rivers and participate in the ongoing Upper Taunton Basin Wastewater Evaluation Study to improve such conditions.

Wildlife

- Make connections needed for functioning wildlife corridors connecting scattered habitats to give the critical mass and variety of habitat need for species survival and diversity. e.g.. from the Aldrich Road property to the Hockomock Wildlife Management Area and also from the Carver's Pond Conservation Area through town-owned land on Winter and Conant Streets, to the state-owned corridor of land off Flagg Street. The last is protected under Article 97.
- Consider Estimated or Priority habitat value or presence on the BioMap when recommending acquisitions

Open Space

- Begin acquisitions to establishing a greenway along Bridgewater's portions of the Town and Taunton Rivers in cooperation with adjacent riverside communities
- Acquire selected areas around the north end of Carver's Pond to complete a proposed trail system and to protect the shore and a potential Zone II area
- Encourage State expansion of the Bridgewater State Forest, particularly east and north along South Brook or propose its transfer to the Conservation Commission
- Identify and acquire scattered key holdings (whether of not under Ch. 61) near existing and projected development to provide permanent nearby open space for present and future neighborhoods
- Investigate the feasibility of acquiring intervening Ch. 61 land and private parcels to complete a corridor from the Toole Land to the Olde Scotland Links and act on it
- Create a coordinated parkland signage system to improve signage at the Tuckerwood, Wyman Meadow and Wildlands Trust sites and elsewhere where needed
- Acquire a swath of riverside farmland and woodlands from the Halifax line to west of Bedford Street along the Wild and Scenic Taunton River.
- Investigate the possibility of adding adjacent Water Department land and multi-resourced Taylor Farm across the Taunton River in Middleboro to an enlarged multi-community Titicut Conservation Area and act on it if feasible.

Recreation

- Complete planned team sport facilities at Crescent Street and elsewhere
- Make maximum use of the water sports potential of Lake Nippenicket and Carver's Pond and of the Town and Taunton Rivers, particularly by encouraging canoe /kayak/ small boat rental activities, and by restoring /creating sailing/kayaking/canoeing programs at the Lake or Pond
- Improve canoe/kayak launching and landing areas along the rivers as proposed in the various Management Plans
- Build the proposed footbridge from the Town River Landing to the Stiles and Hart Conservation Area
- Maintain and expand the Rainbow's End Playground and restore Jenny Leonard Park and improve its accessibility
- Build on and expand past plans to create a multi-purpose town-wide bicycle system and begin signing it, marking separate lanes where feasible, and building off-road trails, drawing on Safe Routes to School funds and other resources where consistent with other plans
- Develop a town-wide bicycle and pedestrian system which would be required of new development through revision of the Subdivision Rules and Regulations requiring such facilities
- Study and act on potential streamside trails, e.g. along South Brook from Skeeter Mill Pond to the streamside town lands at Hayward and Whitman Streets
- Create a trail from just south of the Vernon Street Chaffee Farm land to Sturtvant's Pond via the Town-owned unbuilt Emerald Lane subdivision and intervening private land if feasible.

Landscape/Historic Preservation

- Review scenic roads identified in past studies and designate the most significant ones for protection as designated Scenic Roads
- Consider expanding the Historic District or creating others.

Implementation

- Examine options for open space maintenance such as expanding and funding the role of the Parklands Stewards and/or creating a larger Parks and Recreation Department
- Systematically develop annual recommendations to the Community Preservation Committee for key acquisitions or improvements, and seek other resources from state and federal programs and non-profit entities
- Keep this plan a living document by updating key data including each Parkland Management Plan, identifying new opportunities, and revising priorities to reflect unfolding needs
- Collaborate with active non-profits and local landowners such as The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, The Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater, and the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts, and with state agencies such as the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Division of Fish and Wildlife, and the Division of Conservation Services.



The Taunton River

Photo by Laurie Hartrey

II. Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to guide open space and resource protection efforts and the related provision of outdoors-oriented recreation opportunities. These efforts are intended to protect the town's remaining rural landscape and character, to provide some usable open space in or near most neighborhoods, and to protect natural resources, particularly wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, and water resources. The project is also done to ensure the town's eligibility for state support in these endeavors through the Self Help (now PARC) Program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Community Preservation Act, and any related resources.

B. The Planning Process and Public Participation

The town's Community Development Office hired consultant Katherine Doherty to begin preparing this plan in 2001. Ideas and concepts for the revised plan were discussed at public forums with the local land trust (The Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater-NRTB), the Bridgewater Recreation Commission, the Master Plan Study Committee (whose community-wide public survey was drawn upon for residents' opinions), the various Neighborhood Stewardship Committees monitoring and maintaining the linked park system, civic groups, including the Bridgewater Garden Club, and members of the Bridgewater Improvement Association.

Subsequently, the Town's Transportation Coordinator, David M. Matton, drew upon these resources and the Master Plan to prepare a preliminary Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2005.

The Board of Selectmen, understanding the need to complete the updated plan, formed an Open Space and Recreation Committee (OSRC) in 2006 to review past documents and to create a new vision for Bridgewater as it relates to open space and recreation. The committee included members from the Recreation Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, the Assessors Office, the Board of Selectmen, the Water Department, two citizens at large, an observer from the Natural Resources Trust and informal participation of a member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee. In addition, project staff meets with the whole Master Plan Implementation Committee

The OSRC met to review documents and then developed a plan to best accomplish the task at hand. The Committee decided to reach out to institutions such as Bridgewater State College, the Taunton River Watershed Campaign, Bridgewater's new Community Preservation Act Committee (CPC), and the East and West Bridgewater open space committees.

Through a successful fundraising campaign the Committee secured grants from the Taunton River Watershed Campaign and the CPC. These were used to write some of the plan and to update the Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. Even with this

success we still fell short of the money needed to accomplish these objectives until we were able to contract with the Old Colony Planning Council which agreed to write the plan and matched our funds with Chapter 43D Expedited Permitting District Local Technical Assistance funds.

In order to publicize the effort and to encourage community participation the Committee ran a photo contest where different age groups were invited to take pictures of their favorite open space or recreation areas and to send them to the local cable channel to be reviewed by a panel of judges. Winning pictures were selected and are credited and incorporated throughout this document. Drafts of the plan were made available on line for citizens to review and comment on through a web site created as part of the town's conservation web site. In addition, the public meetings of the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee were posted and were held at the centrally located, handicapped-accessible Recreation Department building next to Legion Field. Interested citizens were welcome to attend these sessions.

Outreach to the main Environmental Justice Population reflected the fact that most of the Environmental Justice Neighborhood contains the Bridgewater Correctional Complex whose population has little contact with the town as a whole and generally returns to other communities upon release. The young population of the northern portion of the Environmental Justice neighborhood is largely students whose lives focus on the campus area, and longer-term residents who know the town well. These groups have opportunities to follow and influence the study through the posted meetings of the Open Space Committee which are held at edge of the Neighborhood in the Recreation Department building at Legion Field as noted above. . These groups also have access to the emerging draft through the publicized posting of the entire document on the town's web page and on the Old Colony Planning Council's web page. In addition these groups and all citizens had an opportunity to influence the final plan at the community meeting described below.

When the draft was near completion, a community meeting was held to share findings and recommendations and receive public comment as part of a final review. All participants agreed that the new Plan should be a living document to be used by the townspeople to maintain the town's remaining natural wonders and to plan for future recreational and open space projects. The Plan recommended that the Selectmen institute a permanent Open Space and Recreation Committee in order to update the document as needed, thereby keeping its goals and objectives on the forefront.

The Committee's assertion is that the townspeople feel deeply about protecting the remaining natural areas of Bridgewater and the surrounding towns, and are anxious for leadership which will articulate their concerns and move to protect and embrace them. As noted, many acres have been lost since the last report and only continued diligence will secure the remaining natural beauty for future generations to enjoy.

The present plan has drawn upon the efforts described above, on the insights and concerns of the broadly-based Open Space Committee listed below, on the exploratory

public meeting, on the “Show Us What You Like about Bridgewater” photo contest, and on responses to information posted on the town’s web site.

Note: Since the Plan was completed, the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts and the state Department of Fish and Game have acquired the 250-acre Lehtola farm recommended for protection in Chapter V. The Trust holds 125 acres north of Auburn Street and the Department holds 105 acres to the south along with a Conservation Restriction on the Trust’s land. Another 10 acres was left around the former owners’ house and barn. The acquired land is expected to remain in hay production.

Bridgewater Open Space Committee 2007/2008

Chair, Brian Connelly

Vice Chair, Raymond Ajemian,

Clerk, James P. Campbell

William M. Callahan

Charles J. Kane

Rick Kranes

Stanley Kravitz, Selectmen’s Representative

Thomas Pratti

Former Planning Board Member

Recreation Commission

Board of Assessors

Water Commission

Conservation Commission

Selectman and Health Agent

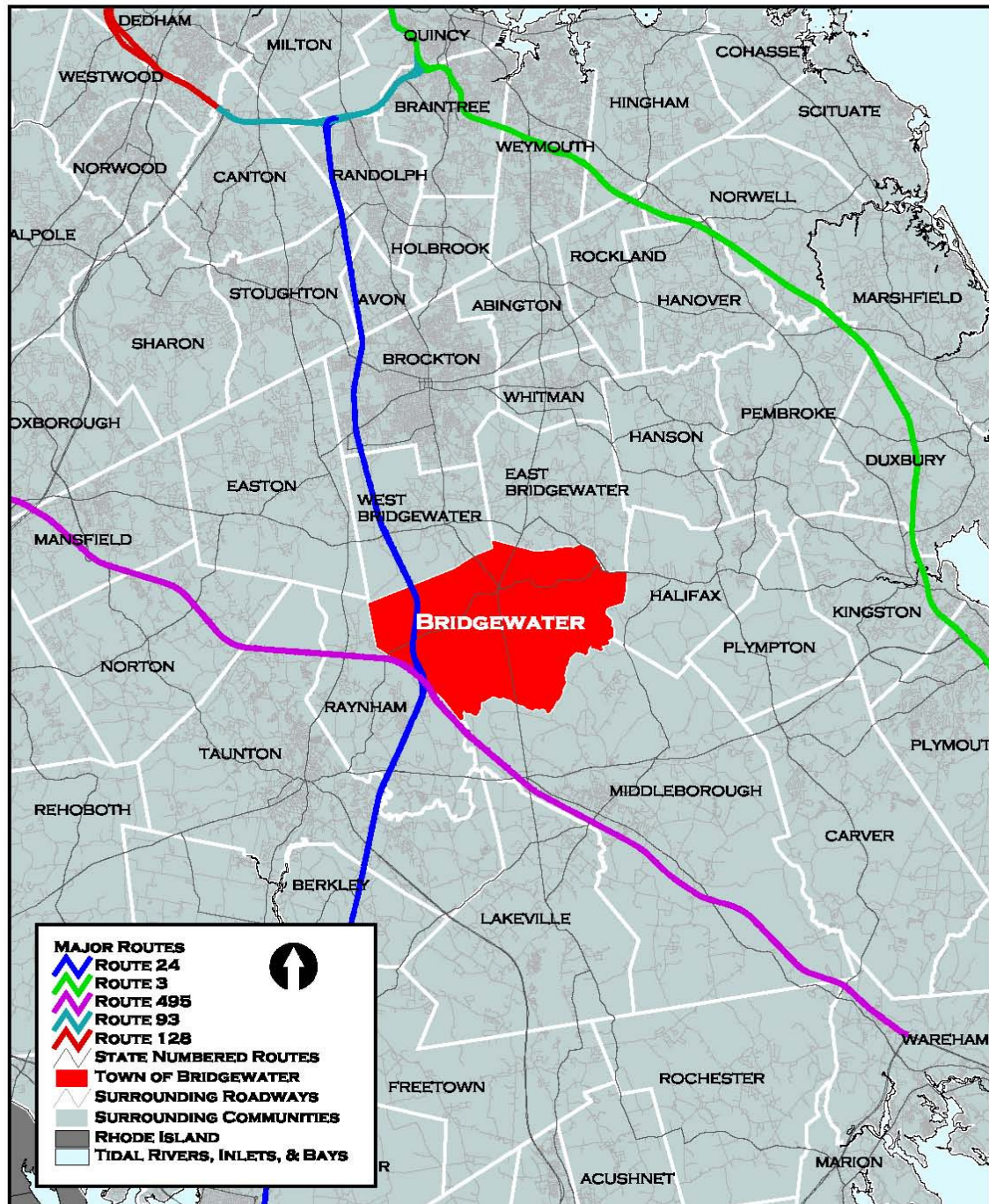
Planning Board



Enjoying the Taunton River at the Titicut Conservation Parkland across from Middleboro

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN LOCUS

FIGURE III - 1



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL
GIS DATA SOURCES: MASSGIS,

70 SCHOOL STREET
EOTPW,

BROCKTON, MA 02301
TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER

SEPTEMBER, 2008

III. Community Setting

A. Regional Context

Bridgewater (2000 population, 25,185) is a suburban-rural town 23 miles south of Boston, eight miles south of Brockton, and 29 miles northeast of Providence. It houses Bridgewater State College, the flagship of the Massachusetts State College System with almost 10,000 full time students and 700 staff, and the Bridgewater Correctional Complex with over 2000 inmates and 1300 staff.

Bridgewater is abutted by West Bridgewater and East Bridgewater to the north, Raynham to the west, Halifax to the east, and Middleboro to the south. A major feature is the Taunton River and its main tributaries, the Town and Matfield Rivers. The Taunton River begins at the junction of the Town River and the Matfield River northeast of the town center. The resulting Taunton River essentially wraps around Bridgewater forming its eastern and southern boundaries.

The town has a strong town center served by a commuter rail station about 3000 feet to the east within the Bridgewater State College campus, a variety of neighborhoods and commercial/industrial areas and some scattered remaining farm land. It also has regional highway access via the limited access Route 24 running north-south through western portion of the town and the nearby outer-circumferential Route 495

These roads give good highway access to Boston, Brockton, Providence, and the rest of the region, while the restored rail service connects the town to Middleboro/Lakeville to the south and to Quincy/Boston/Cambridge and the entire MBTA transit system to the north. Such accessibility, combined with the town's other attractions gives Bridgewater broad appeal as a place to live and partially drives its continued growth.

Regional Resources

Open Space

Regional open space resources in nearby communities include the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton and Quincy, the many Easton Conservation areas, Ames Nowell State Park in Abington, D.W. Field Park in Avon and Brockton, Peterson's Swamp in Halifax and Plympton, the Burrage Wildlife Management Area in Hanson and Halifax, the extensive Hockomock Swamp, Massasoit State Forest in Raynham, the open land on the Bridgewater Correctional Complex (BCC) and adjacent extensive private farmland, along with the remaining rural landscape, particularly in Middleborough to the south, along with the whole Town River/Taunton River corridor.

Taunton River Watershed

Bridgewater is in the Taunton River Basin and all streams eventually flow to the Taunton River. The perennial Town River begins at Lake Nippenicket in the Bridgewater portion of the Hockomock Swamp and flows southeasterly through West Bridgewater, joining

the Matfield River in Bridgewater to form the Taunton River. The Taunton River then essentially embraces the town wrapping around its eastern and southern borders. The river is a major portion of the Wampanoag Canoe Passage between Boston's South Shore and Narragansett Bay.

Hockomock Swamp

The entire Hockomock Swamp, the largest swamp in New England at 16,900 acres, covers portions of Raynham, Norton, Taunton, Easton, Bridgewater, and West Bridgewater with approximately 1,131 acres in the northwestern corner of the town excluding the surface of Lake Nippenicket. The swamp is also the largest inland state-designated Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The designation, largely the work of interested Bridgewater citizens and officials, was approved by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs in 1990. This requires increased scrutiny under the Wetlands Protection Act and other applicable regulations.

Although it is zoned Residential A/B in Bridgewater (as compared to Industrial in West Bridgewater to the north), the Hockomock Swamp is an important wetland and is protected against inappropriate development by the ACEC designation.

The swamp is home to several endangered species according to the state's Natural Heritage Program and serves as critical habitat and a vital water resource for wildlife. The swamp reduces flooding by storing water and also provides some recharge to underlying aquifers, thereby contributing to drinking water supplies, and helping to maintain stream flow.

Bridgewater's western portions of the swamp at the edge of the Lake drain to Lake Nippenicket and then to the Town River and on to the Taunton River, while the portions east of the Lake drain more directly to the Hockomock River and the Town River. Much of the swamp is state owned as described in Chapters II and III.

Bay Circuit Trail

The Bay Circuit Trail was conceived in 1929 by then Secretary of the Trustees of Reservations Charles W. Eliot, III, a disciple of Frederick Law Olmsted. The concept was to have an arc of parks and conservation land linked by continuous trails, waterways, and scenic drives from the North Shore to Duxbury Bay (much as the Emerald Necklace connects neighborhoods and parks within Boston). These holdings would approximate a regional greenbelt around greater Boston and would provide access to the heritage and character of the New England countryside. The contemporary concept is necessarily more modest, as many opportunities for major holdings are gone.

The volunteer implementing body, the Bay Circuit Alliance, stresses continuous trails through the Circuit and connected scenic areas, rather than a wide greenbelt. However, the Alliance still encourages and supports open space acquisition and protection of key resources along the trail where possible, and seeks to integrate the trail with such resources. Over 50 communities are connected by the 100-mile Trail. However there are

gaps where continuous, designated year-round trails are still needed, including some in East Bridgewater, West Bridgewater and Pembroke.

The Bay Circuit Trail runs through adopted and potential segments in West Bridgewater and East Bridgewater to the north and then dips into Bridgewater at Main Street and High Street in order to include the Stanley Iron Works Park on the Town River.

B. History

Old Bridgewater was the first inland settlement in Massachusetts, established in 1656 by Myles Standish. The Bridgewaters, including current day Bridgewater, West Bridgewater, Brockton, and East Bridgewater, had been purchased from Chief Massasoit of the Wampanoag tribe by Captain Standish in 1649. The following account is excerpted from a weekly newspaper feature, "Story of an Old Town" in the Bridgewater Independent (April 15, 1948):

Chickataubut, the Indian chieftain ...had been acclaimed "the greatest sagamore in the country" and his favorite encampment was in the southern part of what was later Old Bridgewater, on the banks of the great river, Titicut (today's Taunton River). His domain extended ...almost to Duxbury and from the Nippenicket in a straight line to the headwaters of the Charles River.

What a choice land was this with fertile fields, glorious woodland to warm the hearts of the huntsman, and streams certain to beguile the fishermen too long limited to the offerings from the sea. Yes, and the great cedar swamps like the environs of the Nippenicket, with a rich offering of timber and shelter, too, for man and the beasts of the forest.

Captain Myles Standish, Samuel Nash, and Constant Southworth ...(made) the purchase ... as seen by the deed dated 23rd of March, 1649: "Witness these presense that I, Ousamequin (a.k.a. Massasoit), sachem of the country of Poconocket,... sold. .. on behalf of all the townsmen of Duxbury, aforesaid, a tract of land usually called Satucket... that is to say, from the wear at Satucket seven miles due east, and from the said wear seven miles due west, and from the said wear seven miles due north, and from the said wear seven miles due south ...In consideration of the aforesaid bargain and sale, we the said Myles Standish, Samuel Nash and Constant Southworth do bind ourselves to pay unto the said Ousamequin (a.k. a. Massasoit) for and in consideration of the said tract of land as foiloweth:

*7 coats, a yard and a 1h in each coat,
9 hatchets,
8 hoes,
20 knives,
4 moose skins,
10 yards and ...of cotton."*

The payment does not reflect the land's value and the settlers understood the worth of farmable soils and water. Later observers have wondered whether the Native Americans thought that they were selling just the right to use it freely as they themselves did, or exclusive ownership of the land. Through additional purchases from them, Old

Bridgewater grew to 96 square miles. In 1706 Abington broke away, eventually followed by the present East Bridgewater, West Bridgewater, and North Bridgewater (now Brockton). Whitman later separated from Abington.

The town was chartered in 1656 and grew as farming and manufacturing community with activities based on clay, bog iron and water power. Foundries were developed north of downtown in the Stanley area where a deteriorated dam now forms a major pond on the Town River backing into West Bridgewater. Other industries making nails, shoes, and bricks grew in the late 1800s. The extensive riverside clay deposits led to bricks being made at the present Stiles and Hart Conservation Area just east of Rte. 18 and at the continuing Stiles and Hart Brick works along the Taunton River south of Titicut Street.

As elsewhere, settlement patterns and road building through the years have followed the high ground and avoided unbuildable land in low, wet areas around the town. As a result, most of the existing vacant land and protected open space is concentrated around ponds, rivers, and wetlands, and on abandoned farm land. The later Nineteenth Century saw the formation of two major institutions in Bridgewater, the Normal School which became Bridgewater State College and the various state facilities now comprising the Bridgewater Correctional Complex, a major employer and land owner.

Bridgewater continued growing into the 20th Century with considerable agriculture, largely dairying, scattered long-term industries, and a slowly growing population. Late in the century agriculture declined with reduced profitability and rising land values for development. A major reduction followed the US Department of Agriculture's Whole Herd Buyout program of the late 1980s when the Department bought out productive herds, reportedly including Cumberland Farms' large operation, to reduce milk production. The last thirty years have seen a continuing loss of agriculture even on the most suitable soils.

As noted in the 2002 Bridgewater Master Plan, "During the 1960s, with the construction of the Interstate Highway System (including Rte. 495) and improvements to the State Highway System (Route 24) the town [which had long been under 10,000 population] began to grow. By 1970 it had reached 12,902, an increase of over 25% in ten years. The growing highway system made possible the connection of Bridgewater to major employment centers such as Boston and Providence, both under an hour away by automobile." The highways also attracted more suburban development to the western portion of the town. Growth increased in the 1970s and has continued as shown below.

In 1986 the town created an Historic District containing 96 structures around the Center. Despite the Historic District Commission's efforts and citizen efforts, two significant houses, the 1822 Colonel Abram Washburn House and the Nahum Stetson House on Summer Street downtown were demolished for commercial development allowed as-of-right under a then recent zoning bylaw revision.

The Central Square Historic District is shown on the map of Scenic Resources and Unique Environments in Chapter IV.

Bridgewater Population Growth 1950-2000

Year	Population	% Increase over Decade
1950	9,512	-
1960	10,276	7.7
1970	12,902	25.6
1980	17,202	33.3
1990	21,249	23.5
2000	25,185	18.5

Source: US Census, includes college and correctional populations

The late 1990s saw restoration of commuter rail service between Boston and Middleboro/Lakeville. The original station off of Route 18, just north of downtown was left in its recent commercial use and a new station and large parking area were built further from the town center between the State College's east and west campuses.

With level, buildable land, good access and many amenities, the town has continued to grow, gaining 8,000 residents (18%) from 1980 to 2000 compared to 8.6% in the County and 5.5% state-wide. This makes it the third fastest growing community in the fastest growing part of the state. Much of this is suburban growth reflecting out-migration from the Brockton and Greater Boston areas rather than local natural increase, but the effects on town growth and land consumption are the same.

One recent advance adding to the local capacities was the 1998 incorporation of the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB), a non-profit 501(c) 3 community-based land trust, by members of the Open Space sub-committee of the Growth Advisory Committee. It is a supportive private partner to the town and adjacent communities in environmental protection.

More recently, Bridgewater adopted the Community Preservation Act to fund a variety of open space, historic preservation, and housing actions. This offers much potential for saving key open space and historic resources while adding or preserving, affordable housing.

Historic Resources

The town's major historic resources include those in the Historic District and listed below. None of these are known to be state or national registers of historic places.

Around the Common

1. Bridgewater Common, Central Square, set out in 1822 for grazing, reputedly to the dimensions of Noah's Ark.
2. Town Hall, built 1843 - the town's second town hall
3. Bridgewater Academy, built in 1799, rebuilt in 1822 after a fire, and again in 1868 after road construction. Used as High School until 1951 and now holding various town offices and meeting spaces
4. Old Library and Civil War memorial - now holding town offices
5. Wentworth House behind the Old Library, a rare duplex cape design.
6. Congregational Church, built in 1836 and rebuilt in 1862 after a fire
7. The Tory House, built in 1716, once home of a British sympathizer, Josiah Edison
8. The Old Post Office - now holding commercial office space.

Along Summer and Plymouth Streets to School Street

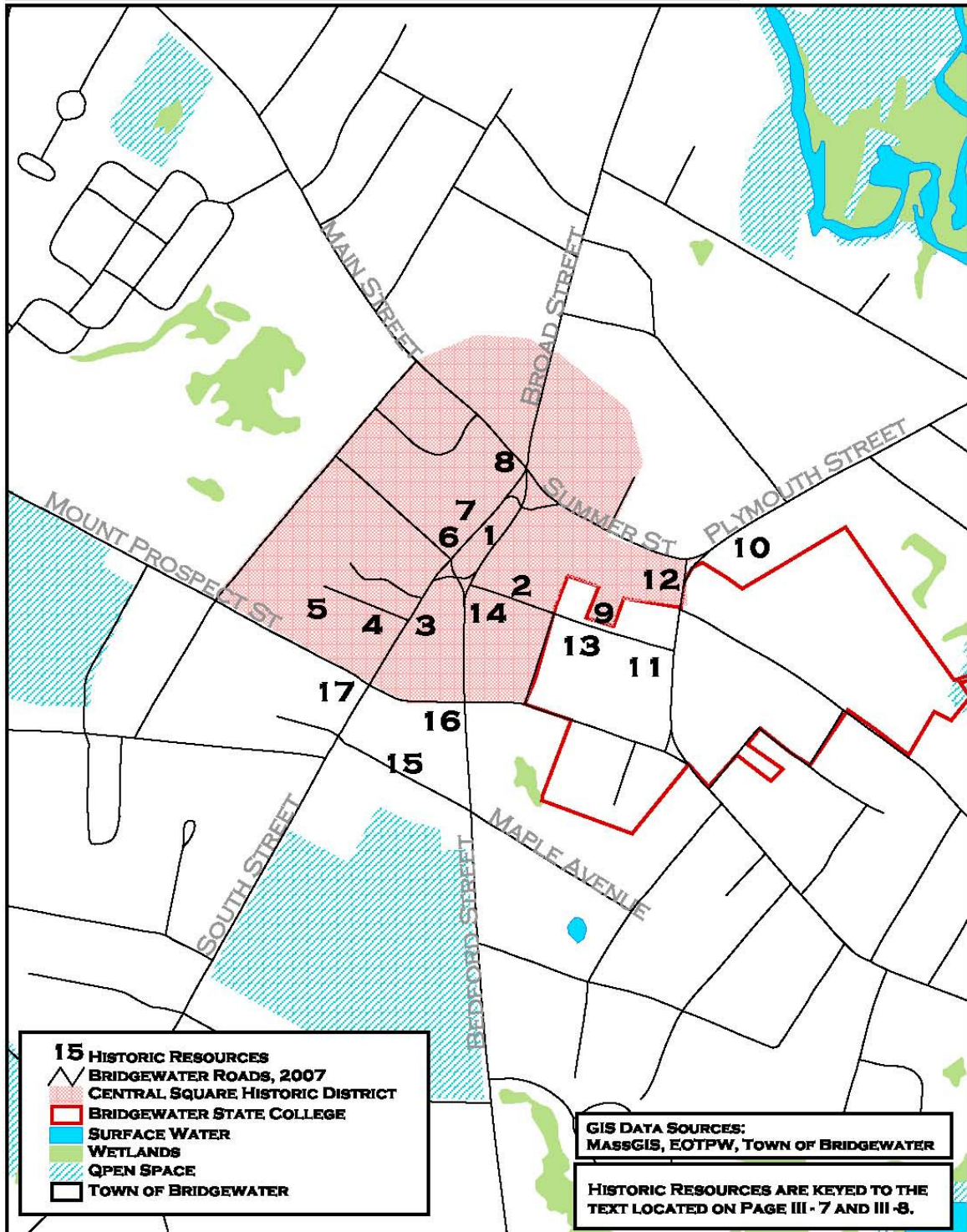
9. First Parish Cemetery, established 1716
10. Honorable S.A. Shaw site, site of home of Rev. Shaw, Second minister of First Parish Church
11. Plaque noting site of first Normal School (teachers' college) in U.S., built in 1846 and later burned to ground
12. First Parish Church established 1716, this is the third structure, built in 1846
13. Samuel Gates House, originally built across from the Hunt School on School Street and later moved to Cedar and Grove streets
14. New Jerusalem Church, 1871, Steeple was rebuilt after a 1996 fire
15. Forbes House, The oldest house on Maple Avenue. It has a circular cellar
16. L. Holmes House, an old cape on the corner of Bedford and Grove Streets
17. Noah Fearing House, 1796 on the Corner of South and Mt. Prospect Streets, built by Dr. Fearing and now occupied by a pediatrician.

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

HISTORIC
RESOURCES



FIGURE III - 2



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL, 70 SCHOOL STREET, BROCKTON, MA 02301 SEPTEMBER, 2008

FIGURE III - 2

North on Main Street to High Street

18. Paul Revere' House, 1790, once occupied by a fifth generation descendent of Paul Revere.
19. Site of the Lazell Perkins Iron Works, first permitted by the State in 1695, it was the second largest rolling mill in the US by 1865. It is the centerpiece of the Iron Works Historic District and is the first park site in an intended 17-mile linked greenway along the Town and Taunton Rivers. It is on the Bay Circuit Trail.



Part of Bridgewater's Historic Landscapes; its many small cemeteries - Here the Vernon Cemetery at Vernon and Cross Streets

Another historic resource from Old Bridgewater's early days is Sachem's Rock on the Satucket River near the center of the present East Bridgewater. It is the spot where the Indian Sachem, Massasoit, met with Captain Myles Standish to sell the original Bridgewater lands to the Plymouth Colony Pilgrims as discussed above.

C. Population Characteristics

Overall Character and Trends

Bridgewater's overall population is relatively affluent, predominantly white, relatively young, and rapidly growing as noted above.

From 1950 to 1970 the total population, including that in institutions, grew gradually from 9,512 to 12,902. Growth then accelerated with the population reaching 17,202 by 1980, 21,249 by 1990 and 25,185 by 2000. With the town's area fixed at 28.14 square miles, the overall density, reflecting developed land and undeveloped land, rose from 338 persons/square mile in 1950 to the 895 persons/square mile in 2000. This is still lower than the Year 2000 regional figure of 929 persons /square mile or Whitman's 1,986 persons /square mile, but higher than the nearby communities of East and West Bridgewater with 732 and 421 persons/square mile respectively.

Most neighborhoods are far less dense than this suggests because these figures reflect the whole community, much of which is undeveloped or in very low density uses. The resulting patterns are discussed below under Land Use Patterns and Trends, and the implications for open space and recreation needs are noted in the Needs section (Chapter VII.)

Employment and Income

The median family income was \$50,080 in 1990 (1989 data) compared to \$47,273 for the same year in the OCPC region and \$44,367 statewide. By 2000 (1999 data) it had grown by 45.34% to \$73,953 compared to a regional increase of 42.43% to \$67,331, and a lesser state-wide increase of 38.98% to \$61,664.

These incomes reflect employment in the town and elsewhere since in 2000 only 2,725 employed residents (43.3%) worked within the community out of 6,292 residents employed within the Old Colony Region according to US Census journey to work data. At the same time these 2,725 locally employed residents filled only 32.4% of the 8,398 jobs within in the town in 2000. The local workers are an even smaller proportion of the total of 12,846 Bridgewater residents employed somewhere (inside or outside of the region) in 2000, according to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD). These figures reflect the large degree of commuting to and from other communities inside and outside of the region.

Since 2000 the total local labor force (employed and unemployed) has fluctuated slightly, and declined overall from 13,151 to 13,147. The unemployed population has risen significantly, going from a very low 2.3% in 2000 to an annual average of 5.1 % in 2008, and recently reaching 7.8% in February of 2009 according to the EOLWD.

The industry types found within the town are summarized in the table below, with by far the largest grouping being Educational Services, reflecting the Bridgewater State College. The largest single employers are the College, the Bridgewater Correctional Complex, Roach Bros Supermarkets, and the Burlington Coat Factory

The employment trends are like those throughout the state and region with declining manufacturing and agriculture and growing services, particularly in education, health care, finance and other services.

2007 Employment and Wages by Industry - Bridgewater

Industry	# Establishments	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages
Construction	110	547	\$932
Manufacturing	20	313	\$876
Wholesale Trade	23	211	\$1,071
Retail Trade	60	629	\$463
Transportation and Warehousing	13	203	\$633
Information	6	63	\$963
Finance and Insurance	24	470	\$1,310
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13	84	\$812
Professional and Technical Services	42	184	\$1,143
Administrative and Waste Services	27	81	\$1,007
Education Services	13	2,145	\$853
Health Care and Social Assistance	33	324	\$734
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	11	120	\$259
Accommodation and Food Services	39	826	\$276
Other Services, ex. Public Administration	89	350	\$450
Total	544	7,757	\$858

Source: Mass. Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

The implications of these changes for open space and recreation planning are unclear. More people working at a distance from home and at indoor “cubicle-bound” jobs, and fewer in farming, construction and other outdoor and physically active activities may increase demand for nearby hiking, camping or water sport activities. At the same time the in-migration of people from more urban communities to a perceived semi-rural one may increase demand for landscape preservation, for nearby active recreation resources for youth, and for nearby readily accessible opens space for things as simple as a walk in woods and fields after work.

Ethnicity

In ethnic terms, the 2000 population including the institutional population was 87.28% “white, non-hispanic,” 4.04% African-American, 6.23% “some other race alone,” (as opposed to mixed race) and 2.75% of Hispanic origin of any race, as shown below.

Bridgewater Population by Race/Ethnicity -2000

Total	White	African-American	Amerindian /Alaskan	Asian	Pacific Islanders	Other Race	Mixed Race	Hispanic Origin
25,185	21,982	1,017	59	271	5	1,669	282	693
100 %	87.3%	4.0%	.23%	1.1%	.02%	6.6%	1.12	2.8%

Source: US Census. Note: Census includes College and Correctional populations in group quarters

In terms of age patterns, the share of the town’s population aged 15-24 (18.3%) is slightly larger than that in the whole OCPC region at 12.7%, while the proportion 65 and older, 8.7%, is smaller than the region’s 11.36%.

Bridgewater Population by Age Range -2000

	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	65-74	75-84	85+
Bridgewater	6.2	6.7	6.4	8.6	9.7	14.9	18.0	13.5	4.5	2.8	4.7	3.1	.9
OCPC Region	6.86	7.47	7.54	6.97	5.8	13.91	17.24	14.06	5.15	3.56	5.78	4.07	1.51

Source: US Census, includes College and Correctional populations

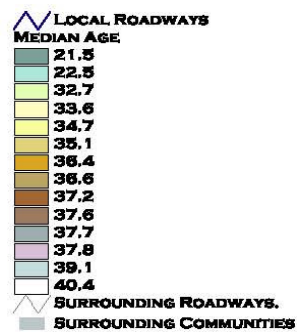
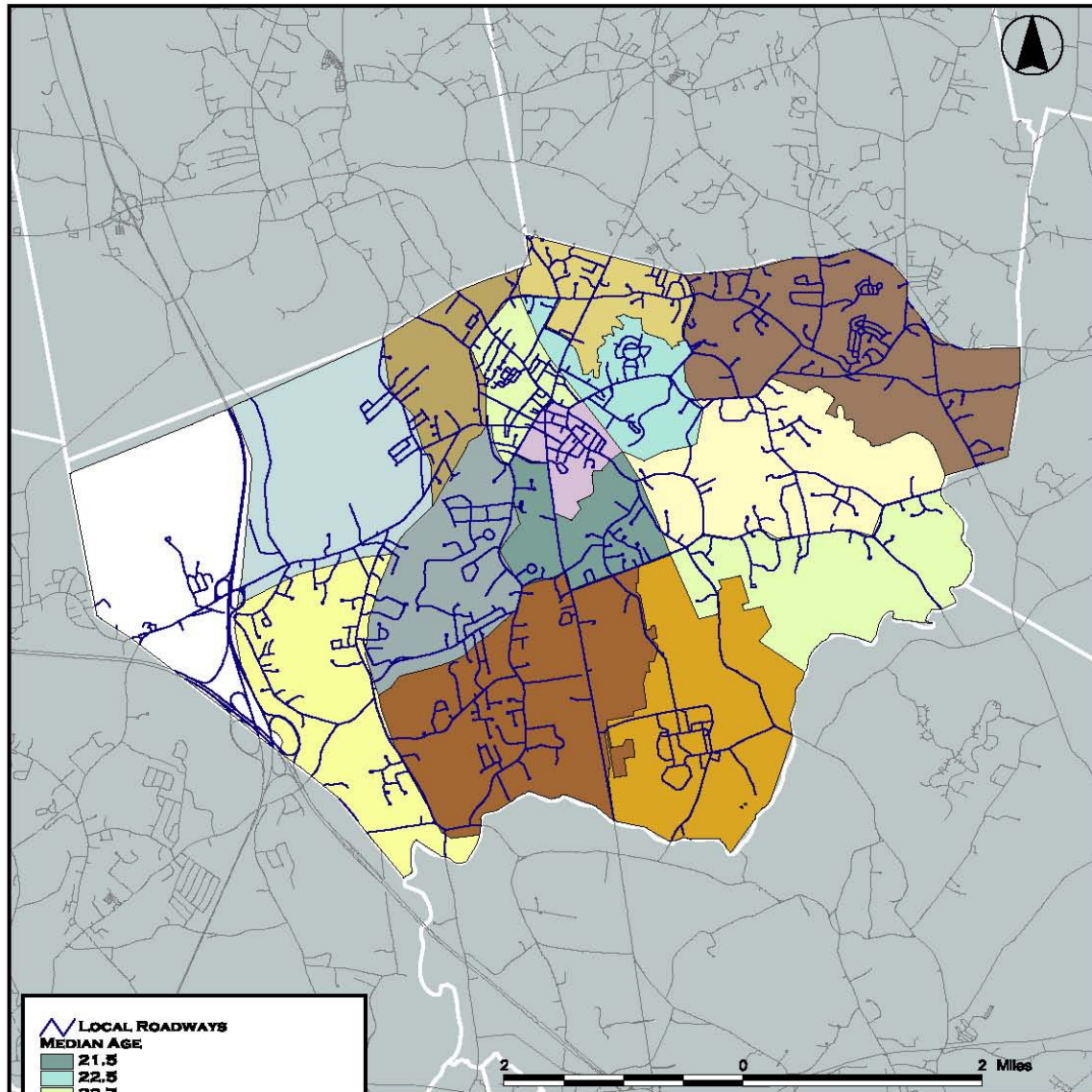
The following maps of social data by Census Tract (Figs. III-2, 3 and 4) show the local differences in age, ethnicity and income age across different portions of the town.

The median age is greatest, 36.4 years, in the tract (5253) which includes the Bridgewater Correctional Complex (BCC), and lowest, 30.9 years, in the northeast quadrant (Tract 5252).

The age data suggest a town-wide need for added athletic facilities, particularly playfields, noted by the Recreation Commission and discussed later. The relatively large 15-24 year old population presumably reflects the college and correctional populations. In turn the significance of this reflects the degree to which these populations use

MEDIAN AGE ~ BRIDGEWATER

FIGURE III-3



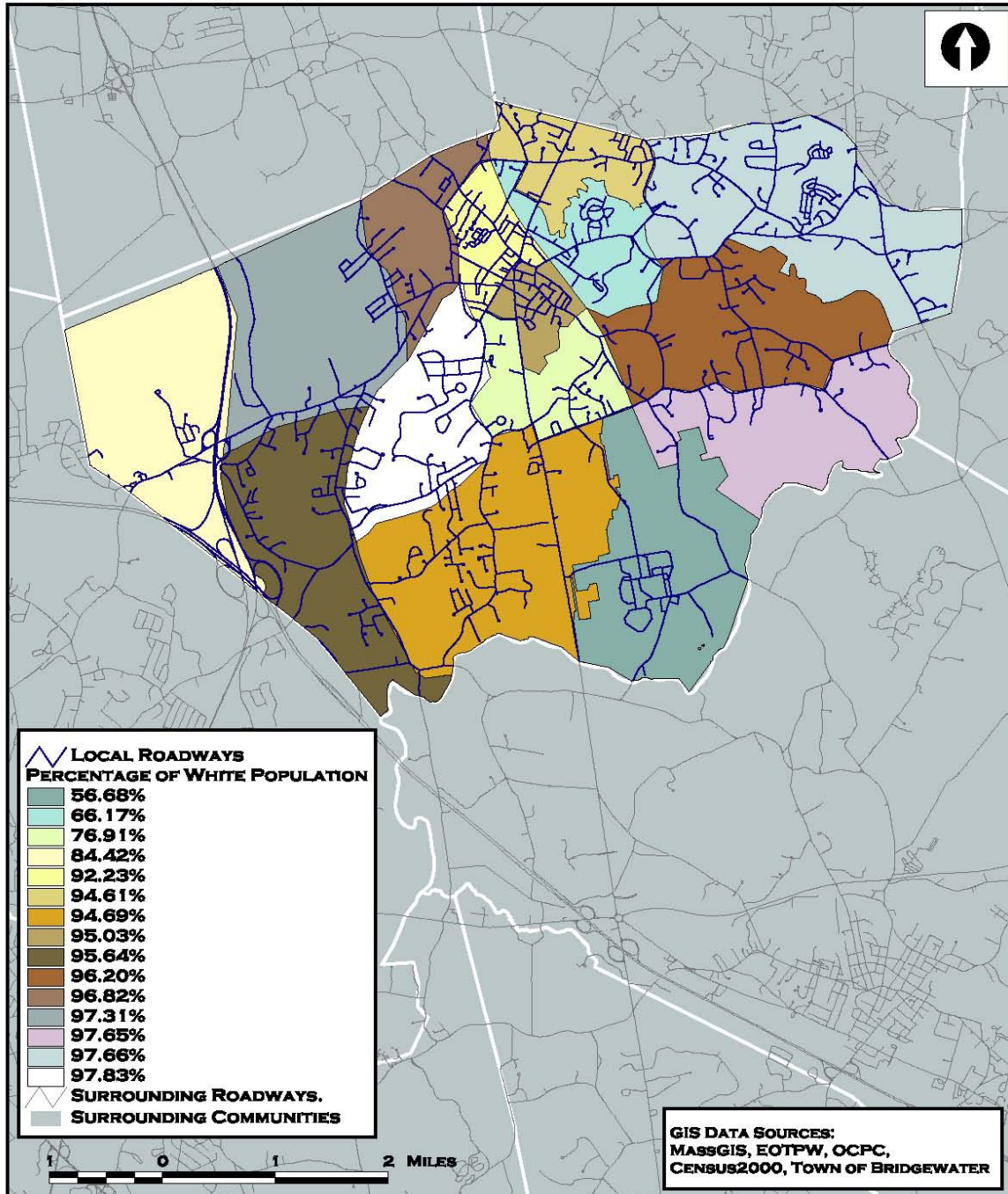
OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL
70 SCHOOL STREET
BROCKTON, MA 02301

GIS DATA SOURCES:
MASSGIS, EOTPW, US CENSUS

MARCH, 2008

BRIDGEWATER ~ PERCENTAGE OF WHITE POPULATION

FIGURE III-4



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

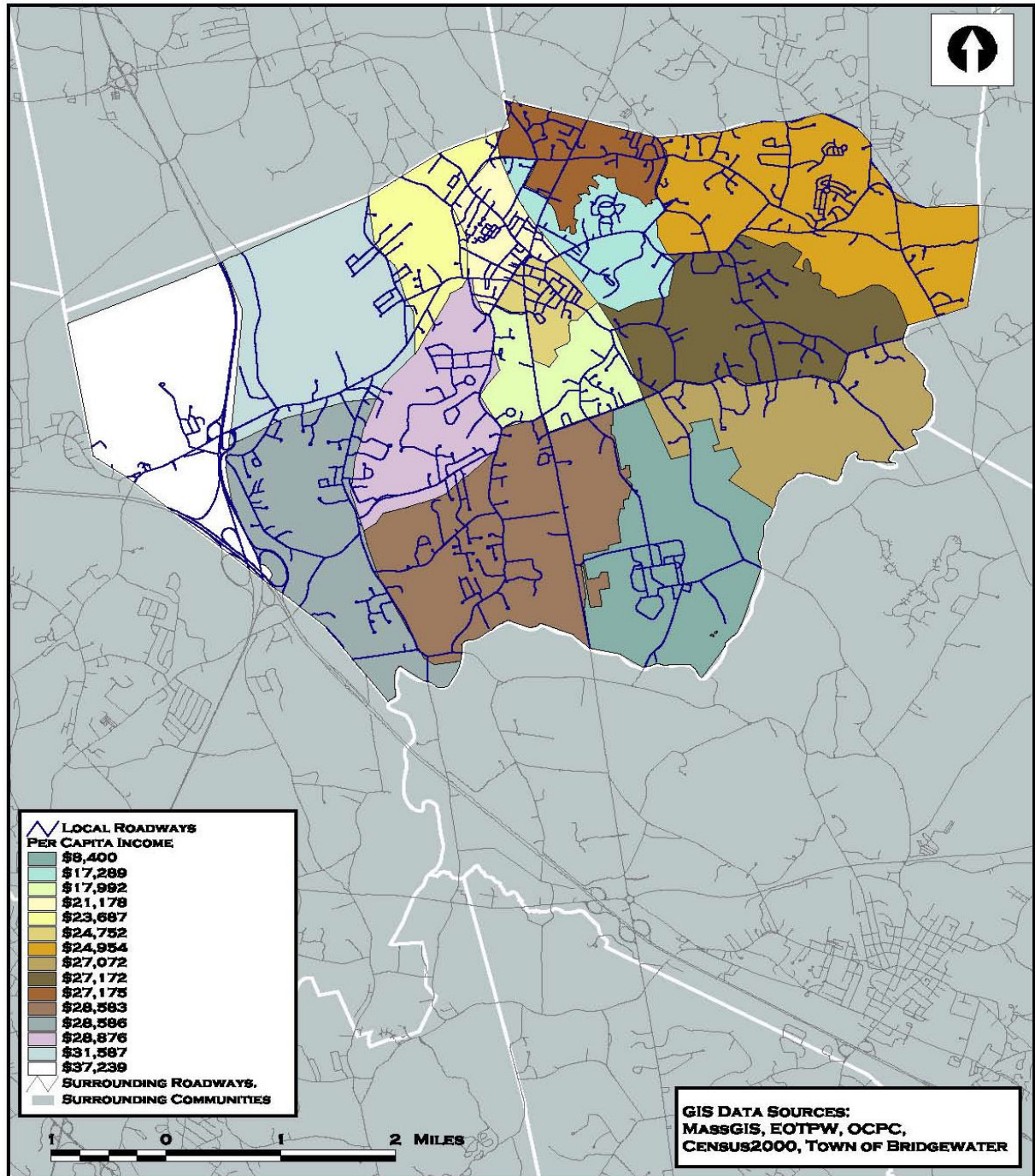
70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

MAY, 2009

BRIDGEWATER ~ PER CAPITA INCOME

FIGURE III-5



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

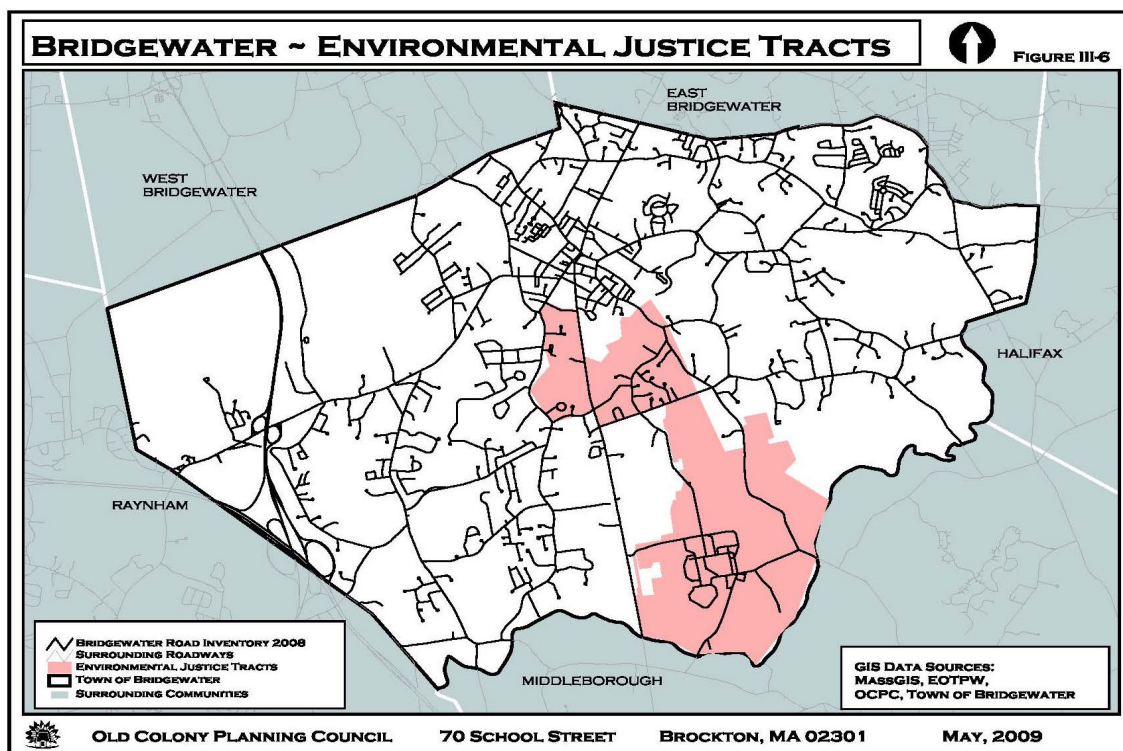
MAY, 2009

institutional rather than town facilities (presumably negligible for the BCC), and the extent to which other town residents use institutional facilities.

In all, the local/regional differences are too slight to determine facility locations and the overall distribution suggests with a continuing town-wide need for facilities and programs serving diverse needs, ages and abilities. Since people of all types are found in all parts of the community, these data are only broadly useful in sitting facilities for particular age or interest groups. The exceptions would be small neighborhood-scale, pedestrian-accessible facilities like tot lots and small playgrounds which should be well distributed throughout the town. Other town-wide facilities may a well be opportunity-driven, taking advantage of any unique sites.

Environmental Justice

The concept of environmental justice is that low income and minority communities should neither be subject to disproportionate hazards and negative impacts of development nor be denied proportionate access to public facilities, services and various amenities. The following map, “Bridgewater-Environmental Justice” reflects the previous maps of income and racial patterns in identifying the vulnerable sensitive “Environmental Justice Neighborhoods” in terms of census tracts. Most of the identified area is that housing the Bridgewater Correctional Complex (BCC) with the largest minority population (over 43%) and the lowest per capita incomes (\$8,400). The rest of the neighborhood to the immediate north is the old central portion of the town with the third lowest incomes (\$17,992), a high minority population (33%), and by far the lowest median age (21.5 years) reflecting a large student population in and near the Bridgewater State College.



As can be seen, the resulting mapped area is not a conventional Environmental Justice Neighborhood. None the less it is worth noting that the plan proposes no hazardous or environmentally degrading facilities. At the same a review of Figures V-1, Land of Open Space and Recreation Interest, and IX-1, the Five Year Action Program, show that the areas include or are near significant open space and recreation resources. In addition, they include or abut major proposals such as the enhanced riverside greenways and other protected land south of the BBC, the Legion Field recreation area, the nearby Hogg Farm/Crescent St. recreation area, and improvements to Carver's Pond in the heart of the northern end of the Neighborhood. Thus, both existing and proposed facilities respect concerns with Environmental Justice.

D. Growth and Development

1. Land Use Patterns and Trends

The town's land uses are primarily residential and institutional with some remaining agriculture, and with concentrations of commercial uses in the center and along Routes 18 and 104, along with growing industrial and distribution uses on former farmland along Elm Street as can be seen on the following land use map. The Center is visually strong and accommodates town's main civic uses, but most commercial activity is along Route 18 with a concentration of older firms to the north and a growing number of scattered highway-oriented commercial and light industrial uses the south.

Other commercial and industrial activity including a new Home Depot store is in the western end of town along Route 104 in the Scotland area and east of Lake Nippenicket.

These developments include the Bridgewater Industrial Park northeast of the Route 24 interchange and the Scotland Industrial Park off of Pleasant St. These are generally remote from the flood plain in contrast to earlier water power-based industry in the Stanley area where the Town River enters Bridgewater, and at Paper Mill Village on Route 104, Plymouth Street just below the junction of the Town and Matfield Rivers where the Taunton River begins. Major institutional uses are Bridgewater State College just east of downtown on both sides of the railroad tracks, and the extensive Bridgewater Correctional Complex (ex Massachusetts Correctional Institution) in the south central (Titicut) portion of the town between Route 18 and the Taunton River.

The observations in the 1984 Bridgewater Master Plan Update remain true; "Bridgewater's residential development continues to combine a compact medium density town center with a roughly radial pattern of frontage ("Form A") development along existing streets and a number of small subdivisions" Older moderate density neighborhoods are found around the Center and along the Rte. 28 corridor to the north. Elsewhere new neighborhoods with acre lots are found in peripheral areas, particularly in the western portions of town. The "2000 Population Density by Block Group" map in the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan shows the Center has having 5-10 people per acre (3200 to 6400 persons/square mile) while the rest of the town has 0-5 persons/acre.

This reflects the long- term concentration of development around the center including the town's two major apartment complexes and student housing as well as the effect of present lot sizes and zoning requirements (discussed below.) Only a scattering of lots around the center are under the 10,000 square foot minimum in the small CBD district and are grandfathered. The close-in R-C and R-D neighborhoods require at least 18,500 square feet and the rest of the community requires at least an acre (43,560 Square feet). As a result most new neighborhoods are being built at a density of one unit per acre or less. Thus, while the town-wide density is rising, as noted under Population Characteristics, the actual density of developed neighborhoods is falling

The continuing typically low-density suburban growth is consuming land and changing the community. As the recent Master Plan notes "Once an area of extensive agriculture and open spaces, Bridgewater has become one of the fastest growing residential communities in Massachusetts. This has led to a significant reduction in active farming ...and over 1000 acres of open space lost within the last decade. "These trends suggest both protecting major open space to preserve town character and carefully designing neighborhood facilities to complement the large private yards – as discussed under Needs

Declining Farm Land

Approximately 11.98 % (2178.35 acres) of Bridgewater was farmed as of 1999. This is a decrease of 19.8% from the 2,717 acres of 1991, and a great drop from the 2,964 total acres in 1971 found by the MacConnell UMass Mass Map Down Project. (The numbers may not be directly comparable between the UMass data and the later Mass GIS data due to changing definitions.) The 1999 agricultural land consisted of 1,482 acres of cropland, 619 acres of pasture, and a relatively small 78 acres of orchards, nurseries and bogs. These agricultural areas and the acres of non-forested wetland make up the majority of the town's open vistas. In addition the extensive land under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B (discussed later and mapped in Chapter V) gives the town opportunities to preserve some of this land if it comes up for sale and a change of use.



Hanson Farm, Pleasant Street

Photo by Laura Campbell



Above: Haying at the W.H. Murray Farm in 1947. Below: Haying there in 2008
Photos by the Peter Murray Family
n



As of 2005 the town's surviving farms were those below. All but those with asterisks (*) were in the Ch. 61A program (mapped in Chapter V). As of 2008 more were gone.

<u>2005</u>		<u>2008</u>
Hanson's Farm	Pleasant and North Streets	Active
Cumberland Farm Parcel *	Elm Street	Inactive, sports dev. pending
Cumberland Farm Parcel *	Curve Street	Inactive
Leach's Land	South Street	Partly developed
Lehtola Farm	Auburn St.	Active-hay Non-profit acquisition under negotiation
Pawlowski Farm	Swift Avenue	New High School, some vacant fields
Murray's Farm	North Street	Active
Old State Farm	Summer and Flagg Streets	Privately farmed under five-year leases
Cherry Street (Perkins)	Cherry Street	Cluster Development with a CR pending

The 1999 distribution of these uses according to the Massachusetts GIS follows.

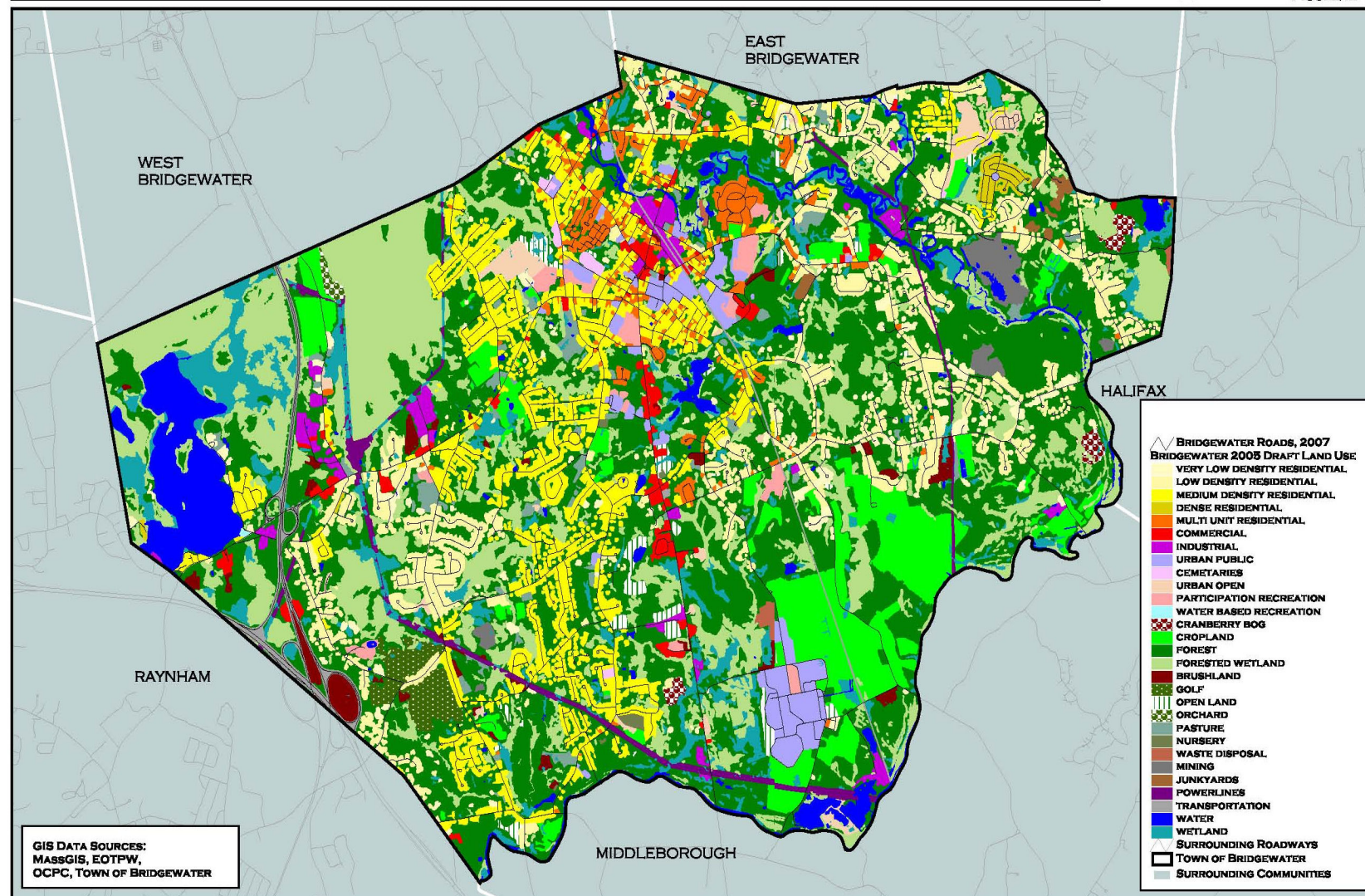
Cropland	1,483
Pasture	619
Orchard, Nursery, or Cranberry bog	78
Forest	8,155
Non-Forested wetlands, e.g. fresh marshes	459
Open Water	563
Mining, sand and gravel	132
Participant Recreation	307
Spectator Recreation	0
Beaches, Marinas	6
Low Density Residential	1,590
Medium Density Residential	2,802
High-density residential	98
Multi-family residential	153
Commercial	157
Industrial	195
Transportation	226
Waste Disposal	69
Urban Open	416
<u>Open land</u>	<u>713</u>
Total	18,181

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

MASSGIS LAND USE, 2005



FIGURE III - 7



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

JUNE, 2008

FIGURE III - 7

2. Infrastructure

Transportation

Roadways

Bridgewater is on Rte.24, the major north-south limited access highway. This gives access to Fall River and New Bedford and Routes 44, I-495 and I-195 to the south; and to Route 128 and Greater Boston to the north. Local numbered routes serving the town are

- Route 28 running north-south through the town along with Route 18 and connecting to Brockton and on to Route 128 to the northwest
- The east-west Route 106 running west to Plainville and to Routes 1 and I-95, and east to Kingston and Route 3; and
- The east-west Route 104 running northeast to Halifax and south-west to Taunton. See Locus map above.

Rail

In addition Bridgewater has MBTA rail transit in the form of the restored Old Colony Commuter rail service running north through Brockton and Quincy to Boston, and south to Middleboro and Lakeville. It offers 12 round trips per day. The station has been moved from the original site at the edge of downtown off of Bedford street to a larger, but less central site in the College, between the west and west campuses. The MBTA is studying ways to restore service to the Fall River and New Bedford (the “South Coast”). One would use the present Middleborough/Lakeville route through Bridgewater, thereby increasing service.

Bus and Paratransit

The Brockton Area Transit system (BAT) offers school year service routed from the BSC campus along Route 28 to a transfer point serving the rest of the BAT system in the north end of Brockton.

Other service is that within the Bridgewater State College campus; the Bridgewater Council on Aging’s paratransit service and the BAT system’s Dial-A-BAT demand-responsive paratransit service also serving the elderly and disabled.

Bicycleways

A mapped bicycle route system, intended to offer safe recreational riding opportunities was proposed in the 1995 Open Space Plan. However, according to the Highway Department, it was never acted upon even to the extent of uniform route markers. The system would have included many major roads and scenic routes forming a series loops around and through scenic areas, and the through the northern section of the town as a whole. It included segments of the following streets: Forest, Beech, Conant, Summer, Winter, North, South, Laurel, Auburn, Walnut, High, Pond and East. The initial proposed system was aimed at recreational riding and by-passed downtown and the college.

However, the density of local streets in the center of town offers many unsigned routes to and through these destinations.

A subsequent proposed system served more potential destinations such as the Central Square and major recreation facilities and called for separate bike lanes along portions of the busiest streets (Bedford, Pleasant, and Hayward Streets) and a cross-country trail from Old Pleasant Street to Forest Street. These were proposed in the recent Master Plan but the Highway Department, which would implement most of these proposals, expects no action in the near future. The following map (Figure III-6) draws on the town maps of the two proposals and the references to “Bike Lanes” in addition to “Future Bike Lanes” as though they were existing, reflects those shown on the earlier maps.

Pedestrian ways

The town has a “fairly comprehensive sidewalk network, particularly in the Downtown/Central Square area” according to the town master plan. According to the Highway Department, sidewalks are provided on at least one side of most major roads except for the eastern portion of Plymouth Street and the southern portion of Summer Street. Sidewalk construction projects completed since 2000 are:

- South Street from Keith Place to Lyman Place
- Vernon Street from Cross St. to Maura Drive
- Forest Street from South Street to Woodland Drive
- Birch Street.
- Cottage Street
- Hayward Street
- North Street from Birch Street to Northfield Street:

Sidewalk projects planned for the next five years include:

- Summer Street from Laurel Street to Flagg Street/Auburn Street.
- North Street from Pleasant Street to Birch Street
- Forest Street from Woodland Drive to Vernon Street.

Sidewalk work expected after five years includes:

Old Pleasant Street and Pine Street

Bicycle / Pedestrian way Requirements

The town’s zoning requires that the pedestrian circulation system include pathways providing direct routes between major buildings, parking areas and roads and a secondary walking system, and that it must allow movement through open spaces.

At the same time, the subdivision rules and regulations say that pedestrian ways or footpaths will normally be required to provide convenient circulation or access to schools, playgrounds, shopping, churches, transportation, parks and conservation areas with a 15-foot to 20-foot right-of-way. Properly designed, these can also serve as bicycle paths.

These standards need to be more clearly defined and enforced. They rarely are fully implemented because there is often is no path in the adjacent undeveloped land to which the required a path in a new subdivision can be connected. This might be solved by adopting a skeletal town-wide pedestrian /bikeway system which would connect major destinations and be binding on new development.

Water Supplies

Bridgewater's water supplies come from ground water in two aquifers. One is along the Matfield River with four wells south of High Street and east of the river and with two new wells south of Plymouth Street along the Taunton River on the Wyman Meadow land. The other aquifer is around Carver's Pond with four wells just south of the pond and an inactive well on the shore of the southern lobe of the pond.

The Matfield River aquifer occupies the northeast corner of the town bracketing the Town and Matfield Rivers, while the Carver's Pond aquifer runs east and west of the Pond and then south, roughly west of Snow's Brook, to the Taunton River near the Middleboro line. These aquifers are indicated by the Zone II recharge areas shown on the Water Resources map in Chapter IV. These are the recharge areas tapped during a six-month drought.

The supplies are protected by ownership of land around the wells and by the town's Aquifer Protection District zoning discussed below. This district is mapped over the Zone II areas shown on the Water Resources map.

Water from the Carver's Pond Aquifer is treated for removal of iron and manganese by a plant at the Carver's Pond Treatment Plant. The High Street wells along the Matfield River were formerly treated for nitrates, but the plant has been closed since nitrate levels dropped following changes in upstream land uses, particularly altered dairy farm operations.

Consumption has risen over the past 17 years, going from a total of 515,847,049 gallons per year (1.41 Million Gallons /Day [MGD]) in 1995 to 612,088,304 gallons per year (1.68 MGD) in 2000, and on to 629,971,419 gallons per year (1.73 MGD) in 2007. At the same time consumption per capita has dropped from 80.4 gallons/capita/day (80.4 g/c/d) in 1995 to 73.9 g/c/d in 2000 and down to 64.24 g/c/d in 2007. This is even lower than the state guideline of 65 g/c/d.

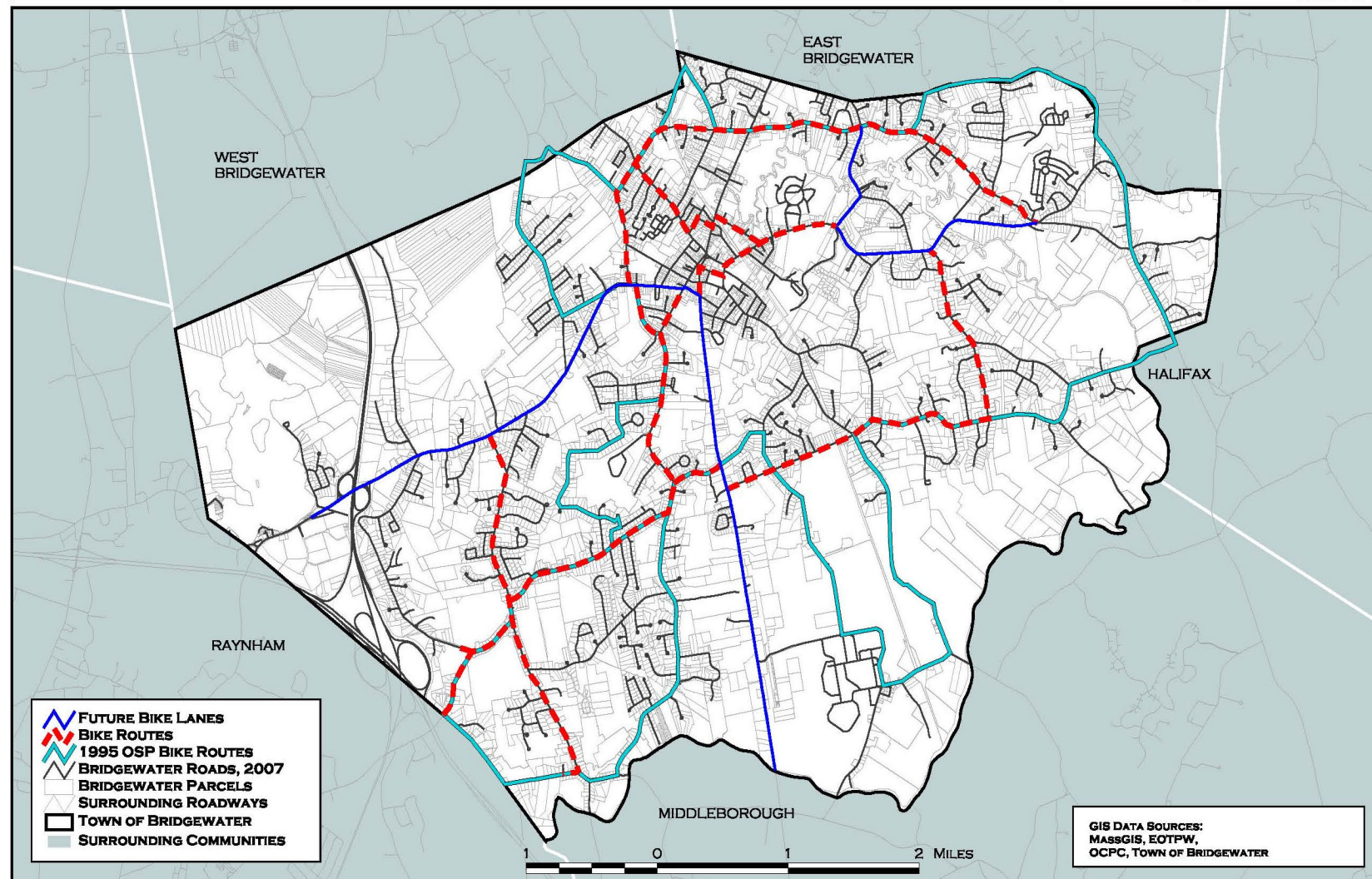
The Water Department has been concerned about meeting long-term supply needs. It recently acquired land and developed two new wells at Wyman Meadow. These went into service in 2006 and are producing 500,000 gallons/day (.5MGD). This gives the system a total safe yield of 2.4 MGD.

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

1995, & 2005 BIKE
ROUTE, LANE & TRAIL PROPOSALS



FIGURE III - 8



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

SEPTEMBER, 2008

FIGURE III - 8

The department has also purchased land at Beech Street next to the Titicut Conservation Parkland for a possible added well. The department reports that the site has turned out to be less productive than expected and the department does not expect to use it.

For distribution, water is stored in two tanks, one on Great Hill holding 990,000 gallons and one on Sprague's Hill to the north holding 4,000,000 gallons. Together these give 2 days storage based on the recent maximum day's consumption of 2.2 MGD and 2.9 days storage based on 2007 average consumption of 1.73 MGD.



The 1913 Matfield River Pumping Station



Modern pumping station on the east side of the Matfield River

The Water Department continues to explore other options such as bedrock wells and alternative sources. These do not include use of the extensive supplies in Lake Nippenicket because of their very high level of iron. Nippenicket reportedly is Wampanoag for “Lake of Red Water.”

With the recent increase in safe yields and its continuing efforts to expand supplies the Water Department does not expect water supply to be a significant constraint on development for the foreseeable future.

Protection The town’s water supply is protected by the Groundwater Protection Zoning described below. This was adopted in 1988 and updated in 1994 in accord with Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Guidelines. Such protection is a concern shared with adjacent communities. Some of the wells serving East Bridgewater and Middleborough are close to Bridgewater and two wells serving Raynham are next to Lake Nippenicket. The Zone II primary recharge areas for East Bridgewater and Bridgewater overlap near the Matfield River. A small portion of East Bridgewater’s Aquifer District just east of Bridgewater’s Stump Pond, and extensive areas of Raynham’s Aquifer District, west and south of Lake Nippenicket, are included in Bridgewater’s mapped Groundwater Protection District.

Sewers / Septic System Feasibility

Soil limitations for on-site septic systems greatly influence the location and density of residential development. Areas mapped with severe limitations due to high water tables, rock, or impermeable soils (e.g. fragipan) are the most difficult to develop with such systems and steep slopes add to the limitations.

Maps in the 1969 Plymouth County Soil Survey by US Soil Conservation Service show that such restricted lands cover as much as 45% of the community, running north-south in irregular bands, covering extensive areas northwest of the Correctional Complex, northeast of Lake Nippenicket, southeast of Bridgewater State College, and along much of the Town and Taunton Rivers and South Brook, over the State Forest, and east of Vernon Street. (Since these data are not available digitally, this report includes the more generalized map of Soil Units. See Figure IV-1.)

Development without sewers will be constrained in these areas, but generally possible, particularly at the low densities required in Bridgewater. Some health agents note that except in clear wetlands, engineers can often find enough porous soil to site an approvable system. The result is that most severely-restricted soils are able to accommodate up to three quarters of the development otherwise allowed, though system maintenance may be a problem. Thus septic limitations do not predict development potential so much as of future maintenance problems. In addition, more recent Innovative and Alternative on-site sewage treatment systems can reduce the needed depth to the water table, or other dimensional requirements, along with the required percolation rates, making previously marginal sites useable.

None-the less, sewerage has a major impact in removing consideration of soil suitability for disposal systems. This makes development more likely and increases feasible densities. Thus, the soil maps still can suggest priorities for protection among comparable sites in presently un-sewered areas.

Bridgewater's present advanced wastewater treatment plant has a capacity to treat 1.44 MGD. It currently receives flows of 800,000 to 900,000 gallons a day fluctuating with the seasonal flows from the college, and up to 1.2 MGD during wet weather. This wet weather flows reflect problems with infiltration and inflow (I/I) which the department is treating through inspection, repair and a mandatory 3:1 I/I removal requirement for major new sewer connection. The system discharges treated effluent to the Town River at the treatment plant site off of Morris Avenue.

The present sewer system serves the heart of the community around the town center, the College and some recently added outlying areas including the Elm Street and Scotland Park industrial areas, the office/retail complex south of Lake Nippenicket, (located over a portion of Raynham's aquifer). It also serves the Mobile Home Elderly Community at the former Wyman's Farm; along with some blocks on along North Street, the upper portion of South Street, Laurel Street and Hayward Street, and Whitman Street.

A number of extensions are planned to meet present or anticipated local water quality problems from failing septic systems rather than to protect the aquifer recharge areas as such. Thus some are proposed for areas over the aquifer like the Fox Hill/Pleasant Drive area west of Carver's Pond while others are only at the edge of an aquifer. At the same time some land over aquifers has no service since septic systems continue to function adequately. The department notes that there is not sufficient capacity to serve all areas presently proposed for service.

Figure III-9 shows the present service area and potential extensions.

3. Long Term Development Patterns

The present development pattern shown on the land use map is expected to continue but with more growth in peripheral areas. This includes commercial expansion along major arterials and near the Route 24 interchange; institutional expansion around the BSC and to a lesser extent the BCC; and residential growth along existing roads and in new subdivisions largely in outlying neighborhoods. New approval-not-required (ANR) housing along existing roads will continue to wall off views while preserving backland, while many new subdivisions will consume much of the remaining open upland in close-in neighborhoods. Some residential growth many continue on an infill or replacement basis near the center with its sewers, access to commuter rail, and downtown amenities.

Farm land will continue to be lost to development except where economically very sound or protected. (Even some of that shown on the 2005 Land Use map (Leach, Pawlowski,



Two crops competing for land; houses and milk/hay

Photo by the Peter Murray Family

Wyman and Cumberland farms) has since gone at least partly into housing or school construction, or is out of production pending proposed development

It is notable that the remaining farmland, forest or recreation land in current use taxation (under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B) is split between major holdings along the Taunton River or the Hockomock Swamp and scattered, smaller holdings next to or between growing neighborhoods. Some of the latter may be the more important for preserving the character and setting of these neighborhoods, while the riverside land may be important for maintaining present or potential agriculture. The major inactive approximately 200-acre Cumberland Farms holdings between Curve Street and the Taunton River also has approximately 2,400 feet of river frontage. They are not under Chapter 61A, thus any protective actions would have to be at local initiative since the town would not be notified of any first refusal rights before a change in use.

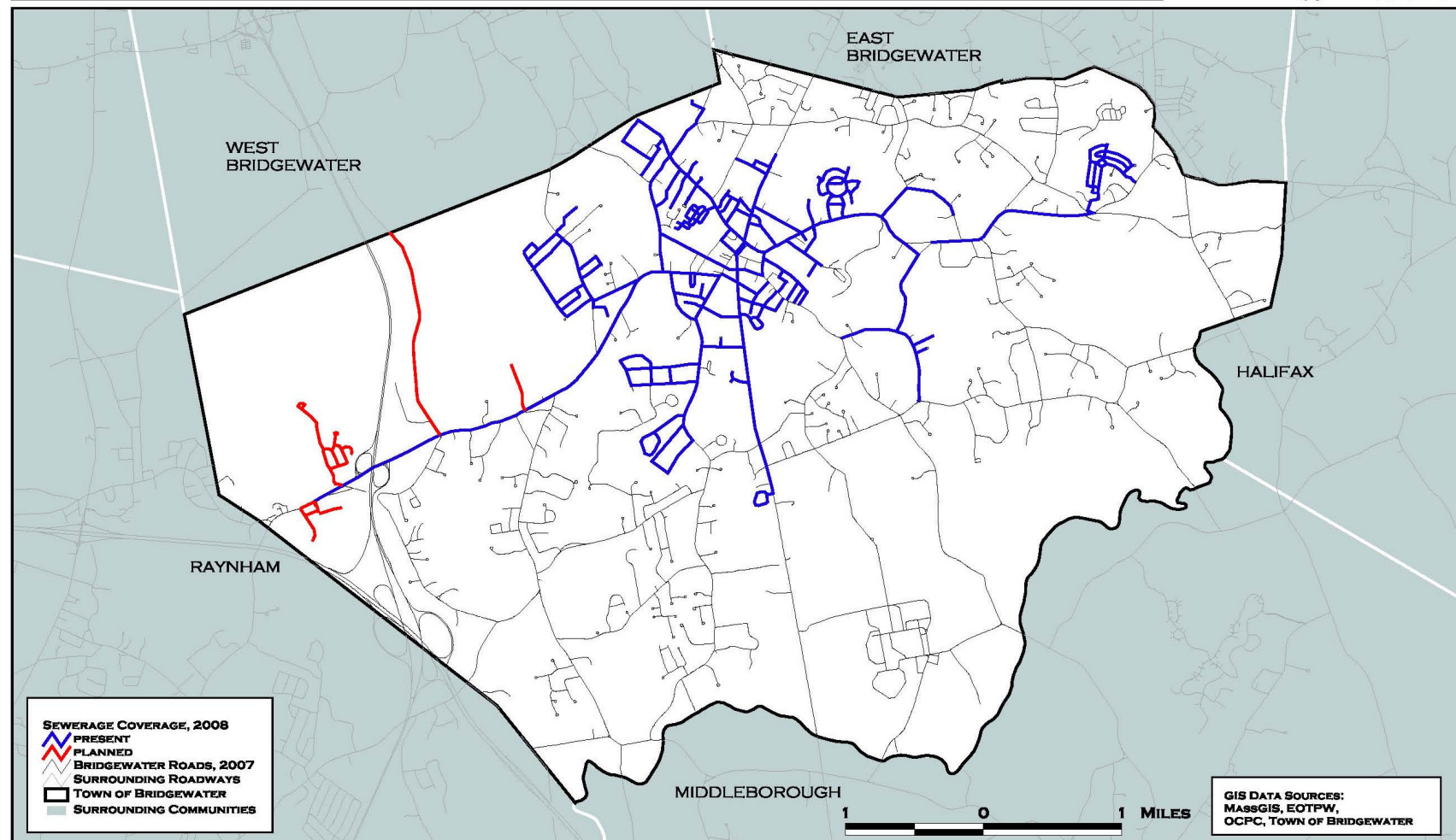
Bridgewater's growth and development will continue to reflect responses to land resources and market opportunities roughly guided by public policy reflected in the Zoning Bylaw and to a lesser extent, by the Subdivision Rules and Regulations; and by infrastructure investments and open space/agricultural protection programs. The Zoning Bylaw is discussed below.

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

SEWERAGE COVERAGE



FIGURE III - 9



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

OCTOBER, 2008

FIGURE III - 9

Zoning/Local Protective Provisions

Bridgewater's Zoning requires house lots of 43,560 square feet (one acre) in the Residential A/B District, and one acre per unit in the Planned Development (PD) district, along with 18,500 square feet in the Residential C and D Districts, and 10,000 square feet in the very small Central Business District (CBD).

The Residential C and D districts allow two family or duplex houses as-of-right while the CBD district allows them by special permit. No districts continue to allow multi-family housing except for the Waterford Village Chapter 40R Smart Growth Overlay District.

Higher densities are allowed in the form of "lots" of 7,000 square feet in the Mobile Home Elderly Community District, but in combination with preservation of 20% of the parcel as open space. In addition the zoning allows densities of up to 22.5 units/acre in the Waterford Village Ch.40R Overlay District.

The Central Business District covers the small commercial and higher density residential heart of the town, while the moderate-density Residential D District covers the largely sewered area around the downtown, and the comparable Residential C District is just beyond that, as shown on the Zoning map. The lowest density R-A/B District covers most of the undeveloped parts of the town while the PD District covers the area south of Lake Nippenicket, ensuring that most future residential development will be at densities one acre or less.

The overall residential zoning pattern is basically concentric, with the highest densities in the center and the lowest in the outskirts. The commercial zoning (B-B, SBD, CBD and BOD discussed below) is in the center, along Route 18 and in small selective outlying portions of Pleasant Street and Plymouth Street along Route 104. The Industrial districts are largely in planned or existing industrial areas along Route 24 and in scattered pockets reflecting existing uses.

Descriptions

The Planned Development District

This district mapped just south of Lake Nippenicket allows mixed industrial/commercial/institutional/residential parks by Special Permit in "order to achieve mixed significant revenue or employment benefits without adverse impacts on their neighborhoods or on the Town's natural resources." It requires tracts of at least 10 acres and individual building sites of at least five acres except for house lots which must meet the one-acre requirement and other standards of the R-A/B District.

The guidelines require a 200-foot screening buffer next to most public ways. At the same time building heights and massing are to be compatible with views from adjacent ways

while building materials blend with the setting or complement it. Thus the development should not visually affect Lake Nippenickett.

While the maximum 25% lot coverage will leave much land open, there are no requirements that it blend into any adjacent open space. Similarly, the pedestrian circulation system requires access to all parts of the development and through any open space areas, but does not require connections to surrounding developments or neighborhoods. The allowed houses on acre lots do not leave as much completely open land as would townhouses or apartments at such a density.

In practice developers seeking the required special permits have proposed setting aside connected land areas for rare species such as certain turtles.

Mobile Home Elderly Community District

This mapped district allows communities of mobile homes (actually large one-story modular houses, not readily-moved trailers) for persons 55 years old or older. The parcels must have at least 50 acres (75% upland) with virtual lots of 7,000 square feet, 90-foot natural buffers against any public way, and preservation of 20% of the site as open space. The provisions do not specify the relationship of the preserved land to development or any open space in surrounding neighborhoods, but this might be dealt with through the required special permit. The District is mapped over much of the former Wyman Farm but does not affect the Wyman Meadow holdings.

Open Space Community Development

These provisions aim to protect “the most significant natural or scenic features” of a site that would otherwise be vulnerable to development. They require a Special Permit from the Planning Board and may be applied in any R-A/B, R-C or R-D residential district.

This cluster bylaw requires a minimum of 15 acres in the R-A/B District and 10 acres in the R-C and R-D Districts, and is limited to the number of units allowed in a conventional development (except that there may be 25% more units in an Adult Retirement Village variation). Lots may be reduced to half normal size with the saved land (at least 35% of the total) going to protected common open space. The land may be held by a community association, a non-profit open space organization or the town, but if it is agricultural land it may be retained by the owners for continued farming subject to sale of the development rights (as with an Agricultural Preservation Restriction). This can help to preserve working farm land at the cost of usable neighborhood open space.

The design is intended to approximate a village with houses facing the street, backing onto protected open space and focusing on a central open space. “Whenever feasible land along public ways shall be included within an open space community and be largely preserved in their natural state or be appropriately landscaped.” The approach’s benefits can be extended if the preserved open land abuts the town’s protected open space thereby extending the effect and benefits of each and giving residents direct access to public open space and allowing citizens access to the project’s protected land.

Gateway Business District

This is mapped over former Industrial 1-A and Residential-A/B land on Route 104 from Elm Street to Prospect Street. This allows office uses including creation of new space subject to site plan review design guidelines intended to protect the architectural and historic character of the area. These include visual and sound buffers against adjacent residential properties, sign restrictions, visually acceptable parking layouts, and low-impact parking design. Though mapped as a basic district with no other districts shown below it, it is referred to as “the overlay district” in Section 3.34.6.

Elm Street Industrial District Overlay

The town has also mapped extensive farmland along Elm Street land for limited office, commercial, and industrial uses (excluding housing) just east of Route 24, and over present Industrial - A Zoning. It is shown on the zoning map as “EOD” (Economic Opportunity District) and is the area the town has proposed as a Priority Development Site under Chapter 43D’s Expedited Permitting program. However that program only requires designating Priority Development Areas within which permitting decisions must be made within 180 days, not creating an actual zoning district.

Waterford Village Smart Growth Overlay District (WVSGOD)

This district supports a proposed Ch. 40R rental residential project on “Substantially Developed” and “New Development” sub-districts requiring densities of 20 and 22.5 units/acre respectively. The sub-districts include the present developed land and adjacent land fronting on the Town River. Varied commercial uses are allowed on the land near Route 104. The housing may include altered, extended, reconstructed or expanded existing development with buildings of up to 70 feet high and a minimum lot area/dwelling of 1000 square feet.

The projects are nominally allowed as as-of-right subject to very detailed guidelines and approval by a Plan Approval Authority (PAA), in this case the Planning Board. The PAA may disapprove a plan for basic omissions, failure to meet the District’s standards, or the impossibility of adequately mitigating adverse impacts.

The high density allowed may make it possible to preserve much land along the Town River and interested bodies should participate actively in the project review.

Business-B

This district, mapped along Route 18 from just south of Flagg Street to Cottage Street requires 10,000 square foot lots, requires special permits for most residential uses, and allows most commercial uses, excluding only space-consuming or hazardous uses such as convention centers, large-scale laundries/dry cleaners, bottling plants, trucking terminals, open storage and uses “detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the public”.

South Business District

This district, mapped along Route 18 south of Flagg Street, aims to accommodate major uses. It requires lots of 40,000 square feet, prohibits or requires special permits for most

residential issues, allows most commercial uses as-of-right or by special permit including convention centers, bottling plants, and trucking terminals. In order to reduce impacts on Route 18 it requires the 40,000 sq. ft. only for lots getting access from Route 18 and allows 10,000 sq. ft. lots along streets “approved under the Subdivision Control Law,” i.e., on back land.

Central Business District

The CBD District is mapped over the area north and east of the Common /Central Square. (However it is no longer mapped over the heart of downtown around the Square itself, as it was on the Zoning Map updated through January 1998. That area is now mapped R-D requiring 18,500 sq .ft. lots and excluding most commercial uses.)

The CBD District requires only 10,000 square-foot lots and may reduce area, frontage and yard requirements by special permit from the Planning Board where consistent with adopted downtown land use plans and guidelines. Therefore it could allow traditional 0-lot line development close to the street. The District allows some residential uses by special permit, but excludes multi-family buildings. It allows most office or commercial uses as-of-right or by special permit, but excludes veterinarians, outdoor storage or automotive or marine uses, laundries, printers and publishers and various space-consumers like trucking terminals, and contractors’ yards, and uses “detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the public”. Thus it excludes uses which would rarely be in a downtown along with some like publishers which could fit well.

Since a compact, varied downtown can reduce overall land consumption and complement nearby open space, the R-D and CBD districts’ boundaries and use regulations merit reconsideration.

Bedford Street (TDR) Overlay District (BSOD)

The BSOD is mapped just west of the southern portion of the B-B District thereby roughly doubling the depth of commercial zoning at that point with the intent to “facilitate the expansion of a commercial node along Bedford Street, enabling high quality commercial development at the location while minimizing adverse impacts on natural resources, in particular the groundwater resources in the [nearby] Aquifer Protection District.” It would do this partly through the use of Transferable Development Rights.

Uses allowed in the B-B District require Special Permits. The sending area must be in the R-C District land surrounding the BSOD mapped land. The amount sent must equal the development site plus any proposed impervious area exceeding half of the “receiving” development site and must be protected by a conservation restriction or transference of the deed to the Conservation Commission; and the project must not have detrimental affects on the groundwater or the neighborhood.

The available land is largely Ch. 61A farmland east of South Street. These provisions offer an opportunity to preserve farmland or at least open space in the center of a largely

developed area. They reportedly have been used to allow at last one intensified development on Route 18.

Environmental Protection Provisions

The Aquifer Protection District

Like most such provisions, Bridgewater's Aquifer Protection District is mapped over the town's main aquifers and over land (Zones I, II and III) significantly recharging the aquifer. It then prohibits or tightly regulates uses potentially contaminating the aquifer and requires special permits for dams, paved areas or other uses affecting storm water management and recharge, and sets standards for storm water management systems.

The District is mapped extensively over the sensitive areas, particularly in the northeastern section of the town, the area around the southern portion of Carver Pond, and a north-south in a strip west of Routes 18/28. In addition, East Bridgewater's comparable district covers a small area east of Stump Pond, and the Raynham district covers much of area south of Lake Nippenicket to the Raynham line. These provisions provide much protection, but ownership is the greatest protection so being in the District should be an added factor supporting acquisition.

Local Wetlands Protection Bylaw Article XXXIII

In addition to its Aquifer Protection Zoning bylaw, the town has a non-zoning local wetlands protection bylaw. Such bylaws can regulate current activities as well as proposed activities regulated by zoning, and can go further than the Wetlands Protection Act (Ch.131, S. 40). Thus the bylaw can prohibit alterations within 100 feet of a wetland while the Act requires filing a Notice Intent to work within 100 feet of a wetland but can only regulate work within the resource area or directly affecting it. In addition, the bylaw may include protection of resources and values (e.g. aesthetics, recreation, and agricultural values) not covered under the Act. Further, decisions under the bylaw can be appealed only to Superior Court, while decisions under the Act may be appealed to the Department of Environmental Protection.

Flood Plain District

The Flood Plain (overlay) District is to prevent residential use of land that floods seasonally or periodically, to protect and maintain the water table, and to ensure proper function of water courses to provide "adequate and safe floodwater storage capacity."

The District covers areas mapped as Zone A, A1-30 on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps and Flood Boundary and Floodway Maps. The Board of Appeals may allow development in the mapped flood plain if it can be done safely without causing problems elsewhere (e.g. by taking up needed flood storage and endangering downstream uses, or conversely, blocking flow and causing flooding upstream).

In addition to the zoning changes noted above, the Planning Board has upgraded its Rules and Regulations for drainage design in compliance with DEP's Best Management Practices.

Buildout Implications

The Year 2000 Buildout Analysis sponsored by the state's Executive Office of Environmental Affairs sought to determine how much growth the town could experience given present land use patterns and zoning regulations. The process excluded land that was permanently protected against development, wetlands or land subject to the Rivers Protection Act, but did not reduce potential development according to sewer or water capacity or soil limitations for septic systems. It did make some adjustments for development constraints such as land ownership patterns and access to roadways.

The Analysis found 8,382 potentially developable acres accommodating 7,610 housing units and 19,538 new residents - a significant 72.9% increase - including 3,517 added school children. There was also the potential for an additional 31,165,899 square feet of commercial/industrial space.

The combined potential residential and commercial/industrial space would demand 3.55 MGD additional gallons of water - far beyond the system's present capacities. The housing alone would demand 1.3 MGD. However not every one is on town water and many houses, especially in outlying areas, could rely on private well. This theoretical potential growth would also involve 76 miles of added roadways.

Such growth, region-wide or in the town, is unlikely since it assumes use of all available land and an infinite regional demand for housing and commercial space. On the other hand it also reflects relatively restrictive zoning. With densities like the 20+ units/acre allowed with the Waterford Village Smart Growth Overlay district or even the 4+ units/acre with the MHEC district, far more people could be housed on less land. In addition, Bridgewater's many locational advantages and attractions could attract more new residents than in many communities despite current budget problems.

In any case, such a buildout would drastically change the character of the community by filling all buildable land with development. On the aesthetic and town character side this would convert Bridgewater to a totally built-up suburb and leaving only presently protected lands and severe wetlands as relief.

On the ecological side the extensive paving accompanying such a build-out would increase runoff and stream flashiness, lessening recharge and depressing water tables unless most development is done as Low Impact Development (LID). This would feature a maximum of recharge and integration of vegetation into stormwater management.

The theoretical build-out would also increase water consumption, particularly if homeowners seek to water lawns all summer despite present prohibitions. Beyond this

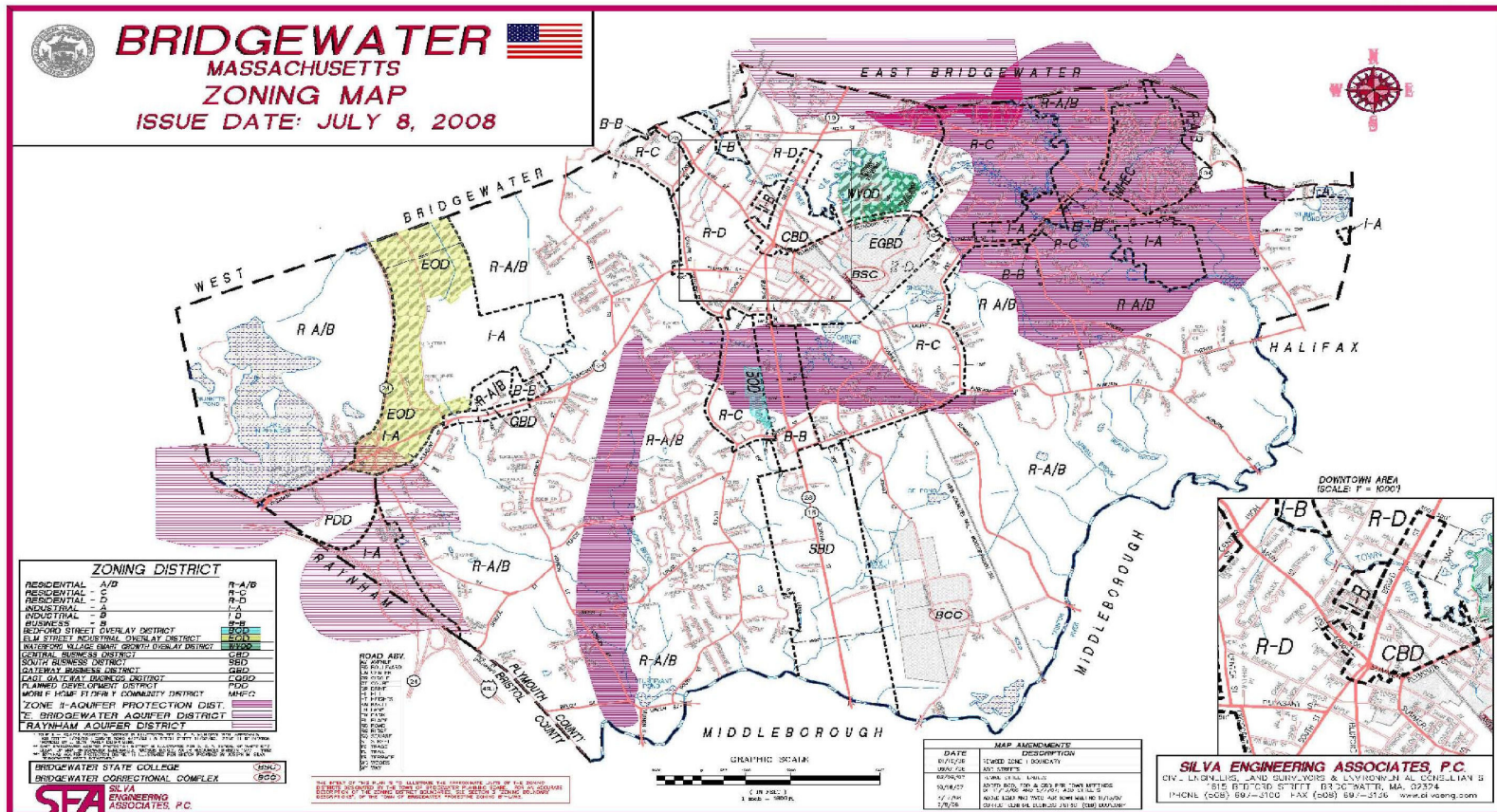
the blanketing of the landscape with housing and businesses would break up areas of contiguous forest or rare grasslands wildlife habitat. In addition the probable prevalence of predatory pets (cats, dogs...) would greatly suppress the remaining wildlife. In addition, the presently required low-density development would increase local trips and with them increase fuel consumption and air quality impacts and add to the global warming effects of greater carbon dioxide emissions.

These remote prospects or even more probable lesser growth make it important to identify sites and systems of holdings needed to create an ideal open space system, or at least an achievable one, and to proceed to accomplish it.

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

ZONING

FIGURE III - 10



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

MAY, 2009

IV. Environmental Inventory and Analysis

A. Geology, Soils and Topography

Bridgewater is in the northwestern portion of the Old Colony Planning Council Region and in the Greater Brockton sub-region consisting of Abington, Avon, Brockton, Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Easton, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, and Whitman.

The terrain has limited relief ranging from 10 feet above mean sea level (MSL) along the southern end of Taunton River to 175 feet MSL at Sprague's Hill and 157 feet MSL at Great Hill on the Bridgewater State College Campus. Much of the land is low-lying with poor drainage and scattered wetlands, especially in the southern and western parts of the town.

Overall, this relatively developed town has many streams, scattered ponds (often man-made impoundments). These are its most prominent geologic features it also has commonly tight glacial soils limiting on-site disposal opportunities and groundwater yields. While the region's extensive drainage system has many streams, none except the Matfield River, the Town River and the Taunton River itself are very large because the communities are close to the headwaters of the several basins.

Similarly, the town has very few major streams beyond the South Brook because most streams run for a short distance to the Town and Taunton Rivers, as discussed under Water Resources.

The climate is temperate, lacking the extremes found in the south, the far north or the interior of the country, and without the range of precipitation of the northwest or desert regions. Yet there is enough of a range of temperature and weather to give us serious winter storms, rare but dramatic hurricanes, and occasionally dangerous heat waves. One fairly constant factor is the annual 40-plus inches of rain needing to be accommodated by the streams and wetlands, or stored for use.

Soils

The various soils' suitability for septic systems can help to prioritize open space acquisitions if two similar sites have very different potential for development. Similarly, in cases where maintaining the amount and quality of ground water recharge is a concern a site's recharge value may be an important consideration. However acquisition should not be crucial in outlying areas if adequate protective regulations are in place - as they are in Bridgewater.

Glacial till is found in drumlins - oval hills formed by the moving glacier. These are shaped like half a football sliced the long way, and are commonly oriented north-south like that on Forest Street just east of South Street. They usually contain layers or lenses of clay along with gravel and other materials and can be very tight, as noted above. They absorb septic system effluent slowly and shed water rapidly sometimes compounding local drainage issues, but they also offer good building sites in popular scenic hillside locations. Thus any un-built upon drumlins would deserve a strong consideration for at least partial protection.

Fluvial (outwash) soils are deposited by glacial melt-water streams and typically contain much sand and gravel. There are found throughout Bridgewater. Such soils offer good (or sometimes excessively rapid) septic effluent absorption and can hold much groundwater.

Lacustrine (lake bottom) soils are fine-textured silt and clay deposited by flowing glacial melt-water beyond the point where heavier sand and gravel settle. The large glacial Lake Taunton covered much of the Bridgewater area leaving thick silt and clay deposits, particularly in the southern and eastern sections of the town. These areas are quite difficult to serve with septic systems and lead to extensive areas with septic limitations. Such soils are can also be found along streams as with the clay pits at the former and present Stiles and Hart Brick Works on the Town and Taunton Rivers respectively.

Organic soils reflect incompletely-decayed plant material and are found in the northeastern corner of the town in the Hockomock Swamp. They can hold large amounts of water, slowly releasing it to streams and even more slowly releasing it to the underlying aquifers. They are poorly suited for septic systems or groundwater recharge and make poor building sites particularly when composed of easily compressed peat.

The patterns of soils with severe limitation for septic systems and those with great potential for ground water recharge indicated in the 1969 Plymouth County Soils Survey by the former Soil Conservation Service, noted in Chapter III, are very complex, as are those from the current Plymouth County Soils Survey by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). However, mapped data from the first survey is not available digitally and it is not available yet in for the Bridgewater area from the second. The following map (Figure IV-1) from the NRCS shows the more generalized patterns of Soil Map Units, i.e., groups of soils commonly found together. While the individual soils will vary in some traits, they are described as parts of such units in the following April, 2000 listing of General Soil Map Units found in Bridgewater.

1. Birchwood-Poquonock-Matapoisett

Very deep, nearly level to moderately steep, well-drained to poorly-drained soils formed in sandy mantled (sic) underlain by loamy firm to friable glacial till in areas of ground moraines and uplands.

2. Freetown-Swansea-Scarboro

Very deep, nearly level, very-poorly drained soils formed in very-deep to shallow freshwater organic deposit, underlain by glacial fluvial deposits in swamps and depressions. Such soils would be severely limited for septic systems or groundwater recharge.

3. Hinckley-Windsor-Deerfield

Very deep, nearly level to steep, excessively to moderately well-drained soils formed in glacial fluvial deposits on outwash plains, deltas, kames, and ice contact deposits. These could be too well drained for effective treatment by septic systems, but would be good for ground water recharge.

4. Scituate-Montauk-Norwell

Very deep, gently sloping to steep, well-drained to poorly-drained soils formed in loamy glacial till overlying dense glacial till; on upland oval hills (drumlins) and ground

moraines. These are apt to be poor for septic system and for ground water recharge due to the underlying dense material obstructing downward movement.

9. Raynham-Scio-Birdsal

Very deep, nearly level to gently sloping, moderately well-drained to poorly-drained soils formed in silty lacustrine deposits. These too, are apt to be poor for septic system and for groundwater recharge due to the underlying dense material obstructing downward movement.

10. Woodbridge-Paxton-Ridgebury

Very deep, gently sloping to steep, well-drained to poorly-drained soils formed in loamy glacial till overlying dense glacial till; on upland oval hills (Drumlins) and on ground moraines. Again these are apt to be poor for septic systems and groundwater recharge despite well-drained surface soils.

The soils best suited for septic systems are those that are well-drained, but not excessively well-drained on level or gently sloping land with no shallow underlying layers of dense silt or till. They can benefit from being over well-sorted glacial fluvial soils unless coarse underlying soils offer inadequate treatment as the water percolates toward ground water.

As noted above, well-drained soils over firm or dense glacial tills will be less suitable for septic systems or ground water recharge because the percolating water will be excessively slowed by the firm layer, often called fragipan.

Moderately or poorly-drained soils over freshwater organic deposits (commonly called peat) or over silty lacustrine (lake) deposits are the least suitable for septic systems or recharge. Thus unit #1, Birchwood-Poquonock-Mattapoissett, is found over much of Bridgewater's undevelopable Hoclomock swamp lands, and #9, Raynham-Scio-Birdsal, is over much of the tight clay soils along the Town and Taunton Rivers (leading to the creation of the Stiles and Hart brick works.)

In all, the map of soil units gives limited guidance to developability since most units contain a range of drainage characteristics and varied underlying soils. Even maps organized by limitations for septic systems can give only rough guidance to developability since many large lots will contain some soil which will percolate quickly enough for a system to be approved. In any case the finer-grain information in the published 1969 Plymouth County Soil Survey and from the even more detailed current survey (when available) are better guides to developability and to groundwater recharge potential than the map of units. Thus the Open Space Committee should refer to this more detailed data if it seeks to prioritize similar acquisition candidates according to their possibilities of the being developed or their recharge potential.

B. Landscape Character

Bridgewater's landscape combines woodlands, wetlands, remaining farm fields including those around the Correctional Complex, views of two major ponds/lakes and occasional glimpses of the Taunton River. It also has, a strong town center, increasing amounts of commercial strip development, outlying low-density neighborhoods, and the major institutional presence of the Bridgewater State College including the iconic Boyden Hall.

Farmlands and meadows bordering major roads are often more appreciated than other less-visible lands because of the views they provide. Most notable are the remaining farms along Plymouth Street and fields rolling down to the River from Plymouth Street at Wyman Meadow, and at the end of Auburn Street at the Lehtola Farm. Other significant expanses are the former State Farm along Summer Street at the BCC, and pastures along South street north of Winter Street (the land discussed under BSOD under Zoning in Chapter I). The approximately 200-acre Cumberland Farms land along the Taunton River is quite extensive with about 4,800 feet of river frontage but is likely to be the least suited to septic systems or recharge. The landscape view from the road is limited to a short section of Curve Street but the land has a major impact on the landscape viewed from the River. It is also across from significant state riverside holdings in Middleborough.

Much of the town's landscape is fading or under threat. In recent years residential and institutional growth have claimed the Imhoff farm, much of the Homenook farm, portions of the Perkins land, the McIntyre farm, the Pole Farm, the Pawlowski Farm, much of the Wyman Farm, woodlands on Pine and Conant Streets, and other former agricultural and forest holdings. In response to these losses and in appreciation of what is left of the town's natural beauty, there have been local efforts to enhance a variety of public land and to preserve farmlands and other open areas. Thus the town purchased the Hogg Farm in 2000 for municipal and recreational use and bought the Wyman Meadow for a well site and conservation use.

With such multi-purpose purchases as with the Wyman Meadow land, it is important to divide the land into the intended municipal and conservation pieces and then to put the conservation land into protected ownership. That way the municipal land remains available for the intended municipal purposes without the legislative acts needed to change the use of "parkland" under the State Constitution's Article 97; and the conservation land is clearly protected - as it would not be as general municipal land.

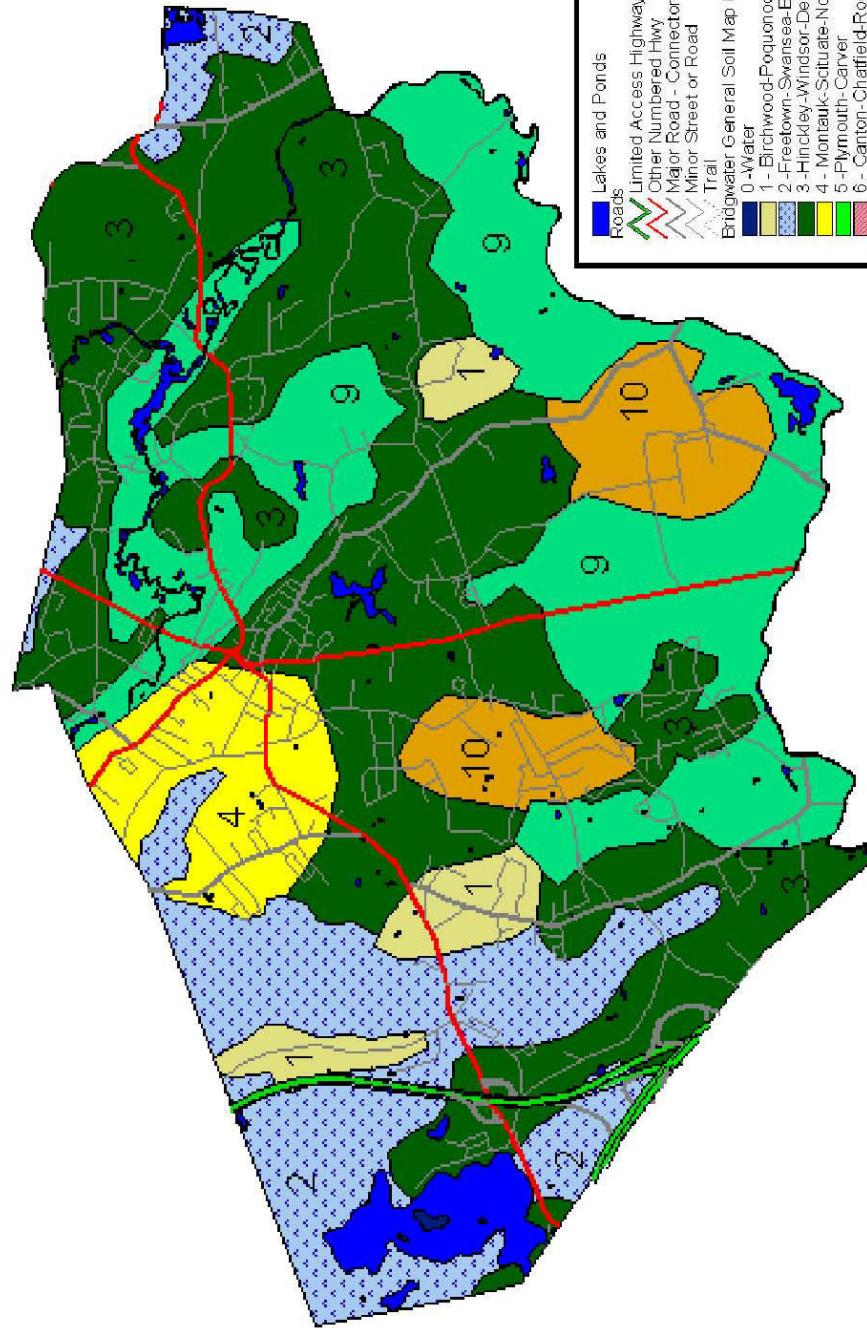
The town has successfully used State Self Help funds to buy the Tuckerwood woodlands in 1998 and the historic Stiles and Hart brick-making site (the former Plymouth County Agricultural Society Fairgrounds) in 1999, along with the Wyman Meadow and the first Self Help project, the Titicut Conservation Parkland. These are all along the Town and Taunton Rivers adding many acres and miles to Bridgewater's proposed protected river greenway. This is a major component of the Conservation Parklands System. See the map of Land of Conservation and Recreation interest in Ch. V.

Earlier in the late 1970s Bridgewater acquired the extensive Chaffee Farm as general open space and then later created the Olde Scotland Links town-owned golf course. The adjacent unused Chaffee Farm land east of the Golf Course is the previously proposed Vernon Street/Chaffee Park intended for further varied recreation use, as discussed in Chapter V.

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

GENERAL SOIL MAP UNITS

FIGURE IV-1



GIS DATA SOURCES:
NESOILS, PLYMOUTH COUNTY SOIL SURVEY



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

SEPTEMBER, 2008



BCC and Old State Farm fields between Titcut Street and Summer St.

The character of the streets bordering these scenic areas can enhance the public appreciation of them by having modest widths and curvilinear configurations, following the topography, and guiding the eye to the view where it is safe to look. At the same time, the overall street hierarchy has to meet traffic demands so a design is needed which accommodates inevitable traffic while maintaining flexibility, e.g. one with narrow, curved streets but few cul de sacs and good connectivity to adjacent streets and through routes.

Most early development followed the high ground with roads built along ridges and land sloping away on both sides and most recent development (except for the sewered area around the center) has focused on uplands that are suitable for septic systems. Therefore, as the 2005 draft plan put it, “The greatest concentrations of pristine lands, some private and some public are now found further from public view along major rivers and water bodies.” Expansive wetlands and forests of red maples and similar vegetation predominate in such remote areas. These resources are most appreciated by sportsmen and others engaged in such “passive” [quotes ours] or “natural” recreational activities as canoeing and hiking.

Much of the coveted land along the rivers is still unbuilt. The combination of farming in the adjacent rich floodplain soils and the protection offered by the Massachusetts River Protection Act and the Wetlands Protection Act has kept significant portions of the riparian corridors free of development, though some has recently been removed from Ch. 61A lands proposed for subdivision.

Still, all but the wettest, most unbuildable farm land in Bridgewater is vulnerable to change by residential, commercial, or industrial development given the adaptability of innovative and alternative sewage disposal systems. It is also affected by development pressures along Route 24. Only the lands in protective ownership, under conservation restrictions, with the most severe septic limitations, or within the 100-foot to 200-foot streamside fringes protected by the Wetlands and River Protection Acts are beyond risk. (And some land between the 100-foot and 200-foot strip is not always fully protected.)



Foreshortened view of the above fields showing old train station structure and hay bales in distance.

Recent open space plans in Bridgewater and West Bridgewater have proposed a greenbelt along the Town River to protect open space and water resources there, and, in the words of the 2005 Plan submission, to “enhance the effectiveness of open space by concentrating it along a significant feature - the whole Town River Greenway in both communities.” This effort, part of the adopted Conservation Parks System program, should build on recent acquisitions along the Town River. It requires a close look at chances for streamside access or potential acquisitions on intervening properties, particularly at the Waterford Village Ch. 40R project noted above.

In contrast to these natural areas is the human-altered landscape. One end of this is the pattern of fields which remain unforested due to farming, haying or related management. At the other end is conscious smaller-scale planting and landscaping of public and private spaces such as parts of downtown Bridgewater. As the January 4, 2005 draft plan submission notes: “Tree-lined streets and plantings at major intersections greet travelers as they enter Central Square. Once there, the efforts of the Bridgewater Improvement Association and other civic organizations draw the visitor’s focus to the meticulously maintained Central Common, which boasts sitting areas and memorials.” See the map of Scenic Resources and Unique Environments, Figure IV-7.

The 2005 submission goes on to note that “This feeling of connected parks is carried through along Summer and School Streets, incorporating other peaceful and scenic resting places with the beautiful landscaped campus of Bridgewater State College. It is a short walk from here to the Carver’s Pond Park. It is part of the town’s vision to link pathways to the Stiles and Hart

Conservation Area, thereby pulling this passive resource site into the downtown community landscape and further connecting this portion of the park system to the river greenway.”

The town has many scenic ways (not designated Scenic Roads) including those listed below under Scenic Resources.

C. Water Resources

The Stream System

The town is in the approximately 562-square mile Taunton Basin, the second largest in Massachusetts. It contains the beginning of the Taunton River where the 14-mile long Town River, originating at Lake Nippenicket and draining much of West Bridgewater, meets the Matfield River. The Matfield River draws on the Salisbury Brook and Beaver Brook. These meet in East Bridgewater, to form the Matfield River which then picks up the Satucket River in the Joppa section of East Bridgewater just north of the Bridgewater town line. The Matfield River then flows south to meet the Town River in Bridgewater and to form the Taunton River. See the Water Resources Map.

The basin is unusually flat with only a 20-foot drop over its 40-mile main stem. This may partly explain the lack of mill dams noted below. The basin is characterized by low permeability glacial till soils and less frequent very coarse sand and gravel outwash soils; by shallow depths to groundwater; and by many wetlands. These features significantly constrain conventional on-site wastewater disposal and may exacerbate storm water runoff issues, but they provide unique habits for aquatic and upland wild life.

Developed land basin-wide has gone from 56,800 acres in 1971, at the time of the second MacConnell Mass Map Down survey, to 92,340 acres in 1999, a 62% increase. With this growth, including much in Bridgewater, has come increased concerns with water quality, water supply, and management of stormwater and waste water. These concerns have led to the ongoing Taunton River Watershed Plan study being coordinated by Bridgewater State College, and to the more waste-water focused Upper Taunton Basin Wastewater Evaluation project. This section draws heavily on the first project’s Phase I report.

The Taunton River Basin has 108 sub-watersheds or sub-basins of which six are wholly or partially within Bridgewater. These are typically the areas upstream of the confluence of two second order streams and range from 5 to 10 square miles. The south-central portions of Bridgewater are drained by Sawmill Brook and its tributaries running through extensive areas of flood plain and wetlands south of Flagg Street and east of the Bridgewater Correctional Complex and entering the Taunton River just west of Route 18. It is also drained by Snow’s Brook and its tributaries flowing through Sturtevant Pond and entering the Taunton River just above the Sturtevant Bridge on South Street. Sturtevant’s Pond is an example of the many lesser streams dammed and small ponds enlarged by impoundment in order to power local industries. These have left well-established mill ponds.

The southeastern corner is drained by Beaver Brook and Spring Brook, flowing through an extensive area of 100-year flood plain and entering the Taunton River just west of Auburn Street.

The northwestern corner of the town is drained by the Hockomock River running from West Bridgewater through the Hockomock Swamp to the Town River just upstream of Route 24.

The north-central part of the town is drained north to the Town River by the substantial South Brook which runs through Carver's Pond and Skeeter Mill Pond east of Water Street and through extensive areas of wetlands and 100-year flood plain en route to the river.

The northeastern corner of the town is drained to the Taunton River by Blood Pond Brook flowing through wetlands and Blood Pond to the rRiver.

In all, eight mapped sub-basins (smaller brooks, streams and wetlands draining into the Town, Matfield and Taunton Rivers) drain the town to the Taunton River and ultimately to Mount Hope Bay and Narragansett Bay. Due to the short distance to the Rivers none of these streams is very long or has large flows.

The last dam on the Bridgewater end of the Town River is at the former Stanley Iron Works on High Street just upstream of the beginning of the Taunton River. It produces the long, 450-acre Town River Pond extending well into West Bridgewater.

It is notable that there are no dams on the Taunton River itself except for the very low, deteriorated one at Paper Mill Village just below confluence of the Matfield and Town Rivers. As a result the Taunton is often referred to as the longest free-flowing stream in the state. (Even the mighty Connecticut River is dammed for power and recreation at Turner's Falls.)

Flood Hazard Issues

The following map shows areas in the 100-year and 500-year flood hazard zones. These are largely portions of the Hockomock Swamp in the northwestern corner of the town, and along river-side swamp and farmland. These are mapped in the eastern-most corner of the town just past East Street; from Auburn Street to and along Spring Brook; from Summer Street to Sawmill Brook and adjacent wetlands; on to lowland by Sturtevant's Bridge; south under Forest Street and then through Sturtevant's Pond, and up Snow's Brook to Pleasant Street.

So far, risks and losses due to flood hazards have been slight due to the terrain affected, and to effective regulation. This is discussed further under Environmental Problems below.

Sedimentation

Sedimentation from construction or agricultural runoff can cloud water or cover bottom features fish need for procreation and generally lower water quality, as well as clog drains and increase maintenance. However, Highway Superintendent Bagas reports that stream or pond sedimentation is not a significant problem in Bridgewater due to proper protective practices and natural features. See Section G, Environmental Problems below.

Aquifer recharge

Aquifer recharge is important to maintain to groundwater table which the town relies upon for water supplies. It is also important to maintain water as a general resource, particularly in areas where it is reflected in pond levels.

Recharge is greatest over coarse soils, like sand and gravel, or where it is augmented by use of devices such as the rain gardens or underground recharge galleries used for stormwater management. It is limited over surfaces with a high rate of runoff such as sloping lawns, tight clay-like soils, or ledge, and none occurs over paved surfaces. In such cases water runs more rapidly to storm drains and the stream system, leading to flashy streams and increased downstream flooding.

Recharge is most immediately important where it directly supplies aquifers drawn on for water supplies. Thus it would be important to maintain or increase recharge over the Matfield River and Carver's Pond Zone II areas over which the Aquifer Protection Zoning District is mapped. However, it is also important to maintain recharge in outlying Zone III areas from which groundwater eventually flows to the Zones II (the areas from which water is drawn by a well over a 6-month drought.)

The areas with the greatest recharge potential can be identified on a soil map and they are suggested by the areas with fewest limitations for septic systems, since those limitations frequently reflect tight soils as well as high water tables. (However some lands with highly porous soils have septic limitations due steep slopes.)

In general, the areas with a high recharge potential are quite scattered and often close to soils with severe septic limitations. The areas with a high recharge potential are those with coarse sandy soils with high porosity which allow rapid movement of water down through soil layers to the aquifer. These patterns can be derived from the maps and descriptions in the U.S. Soil Conservation Service's 1969 Plymouth County Soil Survey.

In addition to maintaining the quantity of recharge, it is important to protect its quality. Therefore storm water management systems using leaching catch basins, underground recharge galleries, or detention ponds are often preceded by water quality devices which remove oil or grease along with sediments, particularly those carrying nutrients or contaminants.

For these reason too, areas of high porosity located close to or over Zone II areas should get a higher priority for protection. However the areas with high recharge potential are so frequent and so scattered that would not be practical or necessary to try to protect them all through ownership. Thus Bridgewater should not rely upon landownership and land protection alone to maintain recharge and water quality. Instead it is important that it has to the effective protective regulations discussed earlier combined with subdivision regulations and water management policies minimizing runoff and enhancing recharge in outlying areas, regardless of ownership.

Water Quality

As provided by the Clean Water Act, states may categorize water bodies according to how the meet the standards for their designated uses. The uses include aquatic life support, fish and shellfish consumption, drinking water supply, and primary (e.g., swimming) and secondary (e.g., boating) contact recreation. The results are published with other data in the Integrated List of Waters, and the following draws on the 2006 edition.

The categories are:

1. Unimpaired and not threatened for all designated uses.
2. Unimpaired for some uses and not assessed for others.
3. Insufficient information to make assessments for any uses
4. Impaired or threatened for one or more uses, but not requiring calculation of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), or
- 4c. Impairment not caused by pollution
5. Impaired or threatened for one or more uses and requiring a TMDL because they are not likely to meet surface water quality standards even “after the implementation of technology-based controls.” These are prioritized and scheduled for development of TMDLs for various pollutants and uses.

The rankings therefore reflect the expected uses and may not be directly comparable, but the available information helps to understand the potentials of Bridgewater’s water bodies.

As noted in the Old Colony Planning Council’s 1974 “Bridgewater Land Use and Natural Features Study”, “While Bridgewater marks the beginning of the Taunton River; there are 233 square miles of basin above Bridgewater that eventually flows into the Taunton River before its beginning. Consequently, there is a significant impact on the condition (and volume) of the River (from) areas outside of Bridgewater.” Thus both water quality and flooding in Bridgewater are partially affected by upstream pollution controls and storm water management practices with results noted in the 2006 Integrated List of Waters.

Water quality is particularly problematic on the Matfield River which drains developed portions of Brockton and East Bridgewater and carries treated effluent from Brockton’s Advanced Waste Water Treatment plant. Thus, low oxygen levels and high nutrient levels were found by the Water Access Laboratory at Bridgewater State College over the ten years up to 2005. Reflecting this, the Category 5 table, “Waters requiring a TMDL” lists the Matfield entering Bridgewater near Bridge Street as needing TMDLs for nutrients, organic enrichment, low dissolved oxygen, pathogens, noxious aquatic plants, and “taste, odor and color.”

Similarly, Brockton's upstream Salisbury Plain River receiving the Brockton effluent and flowing to the Matfield is listed as needing TMDLs for organic enrichment /low dissolved oxygen, nutrients, pathogens, "taste, odor and color," noxious aquatic plants, and turbidity. However the on-going upgrade of the Brockton Waste Water Treatment Plant is expected to ease these conditions.

In addition, Meadow Brook, which flows to the Matfield in East Bridgewater, downstream of the Brockton plant is listed as needing a TMDL for pathogens.

Further, the Satucket River, another Matfield tributary issuing from East Bridgewater's Robbins Pond, is listed as Category 2, attaining the standards for aquatic life, primary and secondary contact, and aesthetics, while the Winnetuxet River which joins the Taunton in Halifax is listed as only attaining aesthetic standards on the table of Category 2 bodies "Attaining Some Uses; Others not Assessed." Poor Meadow Brook flowing to the Satucket River in East Bridgewater is listed as Category 3, insufficient information for an assessment.

Finally, Queset Brook, rising in Easton and flowing through West Bridgewater to the Town River via the Hockomock River, is also in Category 3, as is the Town River itself from Lake Nippenickett to its confluence with the Matfield River. No uses are assessed for the Town River in Bridgewater.

The Taunton River itself is listed with no significant impairments in Bridgewater though conditions worsen to the south with organic enrichment/low dissolved oxygen and pathogens.

Water Quality Protection

Water quality is protected by the town's aquifer protection zoning limiting potentially hazardous uses in aquifer recharge areas, by enforcement of the state Sanitary Code (Title V), by the functioning of the Advanced Waste Water Treatment plant operating under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES), and by any provisions encouraging LID practices to reduce direct storm runoff to storm sewers, streams and ponds.

Riverside Acquisitions

Major recently-acquired town holdings along the rivers are:

- The 20-acre Iron Works Site
- The 70-acre Stiles and Hart Site
- The 32-acre Tuckerwood site
- The 35-acre Wyman Meadow next to 15 acres of water land

All but the donated Iron Works Park were acquired through the State's Self Help program.

These join the Self Help-aided 1978 purchase of the 27.8 acre Titicut Conservation Parklands in protecting much river frontage.

Other important riverside properties are

- The 41.2-acre Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts North Fork Preserve

- The Highway Department's 20.2-acre riverside sand pit property
- The Water Department's 18.0 acres next to the Titicut Conservation Parkland
- The extensive BCC/Old State Farms lands legislatively protected under Article 97

In addition, the town owns a 2.6-acre unprotected house lot (Map 25/ Lot 81) running from Plymouth Street steeply down to the Taunton River just west of Jillian's Way; and further downstream, west of Routes 18/28 the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts has a Conservation Restriction on a 12.69-acre parcel (lot 118/4) off of South street, just east of Dickens Street. This preserves the land, but offers no public access

In all the town, the Wildlands Trust, and the state control at least 3.7 miles of protected river frontage on the Town and Taunton Rivers and about 1.6 miles of partially ("limited") protected Taunton River frontage is owned by the Highway and Water departments, along with a .66 mile stretch of partially ("limited") protected Water Department lands on the Matfield River. These are discussed below in Chapter V, Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest.

Recently, two federally-supported Taunton River Wild and Scenic Feasibility Studies for the upper and lower rivers were combined in one nomination which led to the federal designation of the Taunton River as a Wild and Scenic River. The study was facilitated by the National Park Service in partnership with Bridgewater, West Bridgewater, Halifax, Raynham, Middleborough and Taunton, along with many agencies, most notably the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and citizen groups such as the Taunton River Watershed Alliance and the Taunton River Stewardship Program.

This study drew on more detailed studies such as the 2003 Town River Shoreline Survey Report and its Action Recommendations for that major Taunton River tributary. The recommendations for areas along the Town and Taunton Rivers are discussed in Chapter V, Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest, and in the later Goals and Objectives and Five Year Action Plan sections.

Lakes, Ponds and Vernal Pools

The town's major water body, Lake Nippenicket, is a natural lake, while Carver's Pond, the next biggest, and the town's smaller ponds like those described below are generally impoundments. They are behind dams or smaller control structures commonly located above road culverts.

In addition to "The Nip" and Carver's Pond, Skeeter Mill Pond ("Flynn's Pond") and Sturtevant's Pond, there are other, largely privately-owned, smaller ponds which provide habitat, fishing and limited canoeing/kayaking boating opportunities, but may be unattractive for swimming or too small to be publicly accessible as Great Ponds. Some may have a potential to be managed for flood control purposes.

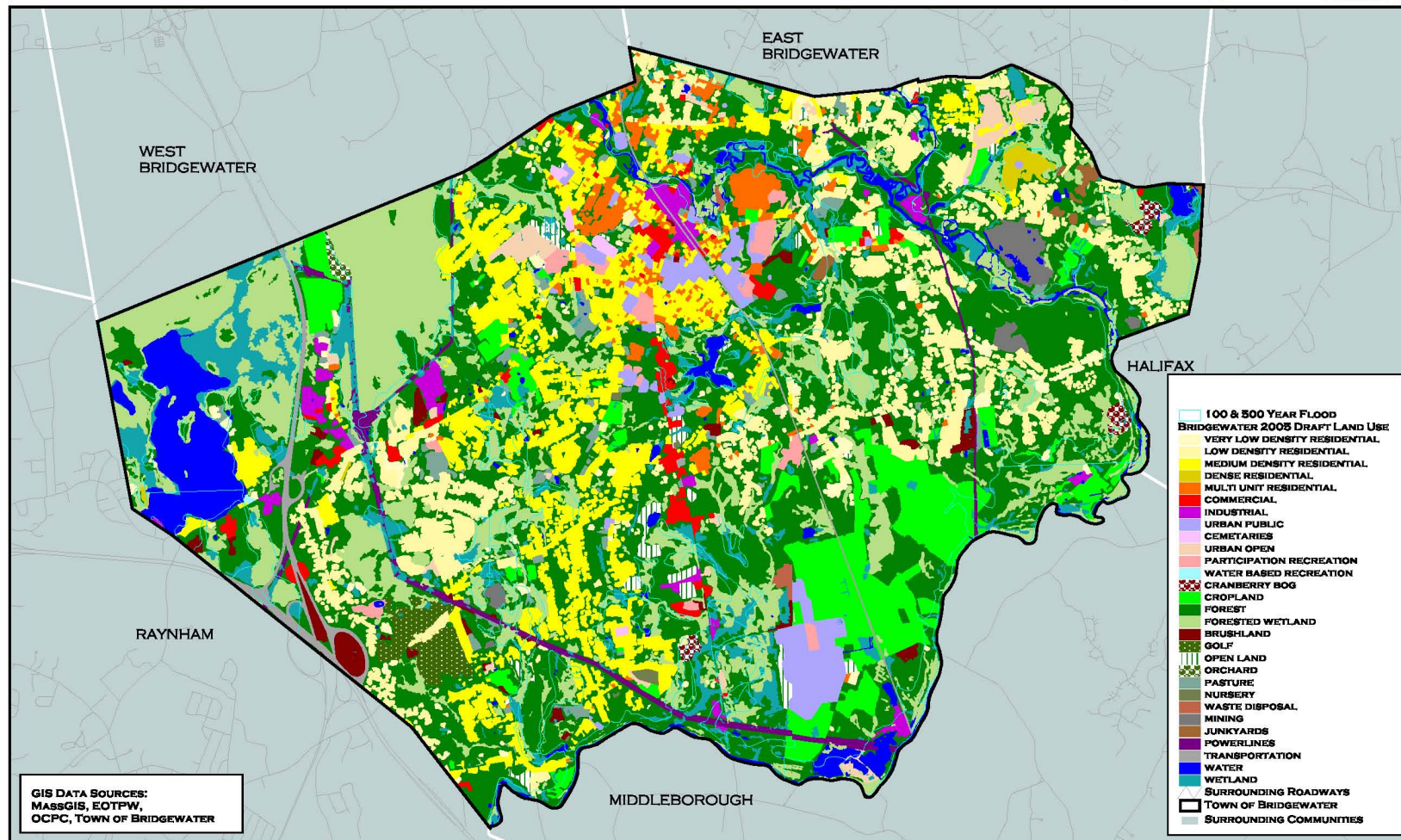
The mapped lakes and ponds include:

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

MASSGIS DRAFT LAND USE, 2005
AND 100 AND 500 YEAR FLOOD ZONE



FIGURE IV - 2



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

JUNE, 2008

FIGURE IV - 2

Lake Nippenicket - (See cover) A shallow, but nearly 500-acre regional recreation resource and the headwater of the Town River. The water is light brown from iron (and /or tannic acid or decaying vegetation) but clean. It offers water-based recreation opportunities, though a sign indicates that the State has “permanently closed the beach” after a drowning.

Much of the west shore is owned by the state with scattered town holdings, and 102 acres on the east shore were recently acquired by the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts and the Nature Conservancy as described in Chapter V.

Nitrogen loading has been cited as a major problem on the Lake, but more recently attention has gone to the increased sedimentation on this shallow lake and to accelerated eutrophication. It is listed in Category 5, “Waters requiring a TMDL”, as needing TMDLs for metals and exotic species.

Carver’s Pond - An estimated 25-acre former mill pond and ice pond listed as Category 4c. It is an impoundment of South Brook just west of Summer Street and abuts wetlands and town wells. Most of the shore is town-owned water supply protection and conservation land, and surrounding paths allow low impact recreational use. The pond has a partially-breached, but since repaired, earthen dam and a deteriorated control structure rated “Poor” by the state’s Dam Safety Program. The Highway Department’s studies have recommended further repairs including filling the breach with clay, but work has been constrained by incomplete public ownership.

Sedimentation and eutrophication are reported to be increasingly evident in Carver’s Pond. In addition the Massachusetts Year 2006 Integrated List of Waters has the Pond in Category 4c, “Impairment not caused by a pollutant” by rather by “exotic species.” There is a potential for raising the pond during a storm if the boards were made operable, but there is no provision for significantly lowering the pond before a storm as is done at the downstream Skeeter Mill Pond. Highway Superintendent Andrew Bagas reports that it is important to maintain a significant level since the adjacent town wells are probably influenced by the pond’s level. He also reports that the dam has handled all recent storms without damage to the downstream woods and wetlands. Thus Bridgewater’s one rated dam (the High Street / Town River dam) is listed as in poor condition, but it is unlikely to cause significant downstream damage.

Skeeter Mill Pond (aka Flynn’s Pond) - The estimated 5-8 acre pond is on South Brook at Water Street downstream from Carver’s Pond and just above the State Forest. Sedimentation and eutrophication are increasingly evident here as in other ponds.

The pond is impounded by a control structure with boards and slots covered by a heavy grate. Water flows through a low opening and over internal boards before dropping to the much lower South Brook via a culvert under Water Street. Any water flowing over the structure would enter the culvert via the grate without topping the road. The Highway Department removes boards before major storms and replaces them after the peak flow, thereby protecting pond-side property and potentially slowing flood flows while the pond refills.



Skeeter Mill Pond/Flynn's Pond north of Water Street (Note unfortunate sluce in foreground carrying road runoff directly to the pond.)

The most accessible part of the pond along Water Street is largely privately-owned and is notable for benches and fishing space provided for public use by the generous private owner, who intends to keep it available to the public, as discussed later. Much of the rest of the pond is state-owned.

There may be a potential to restore a herring run here but some observers feel that it would be too difficult/expensive to install a needed fish ladder here and at the upstream Carver's Pond dam.

Sturtevant's Pond - This estimated 8.9-acre pond at the end of South Street, with access from Green Street is an impoundment of Snow's Brook which flows south to the Taunton River. It has two modern concrete control structures with boards allowing the pond to be raised or lowered. The town owns an estimated one third of the pond shore with access from Green Street.

Blood Pond - A small (estimated 2-3 acre) impoundment of Blood Pond Brook just north of the Taunton River and Plymouth Street and accessible from Plymouth Street. The earthen and stone dam has a fixed outlet via a corrugated pipe dropping water to a much lower channel under Plymouth Street. There is no apparent provision for lowering or raising this small pond.

Ice Pond – This is a small wooded impoundment at the north end of the BCC grounds having no apparent control structure and draining to a tributary of Sawmill Brook. It was used for ice harvesting and has been used more recently for skating and as a water source for community gardens.



Skeeter Mill Pond on an April Day



Small Blood Pond (left) and its fixed outlet (right), essentially a spillway for high water

Cross Street Pond - This 6.4 acre pond south of Cross Street, and east of South Street is listed as Category 3, as it has no uses assessed.

The Town River Impoundment at High Street in the Stanley Ironworks neighborhood. The Town River flows through stone culverts under High Street and it is later impounded for over a mile by the deteriorated privately-owned former mill dam. The total pond is listed at 18 acres in the West Bridgewater Open Space Plan, suggesting that Bridgewater's portion is 1.5 to 2 acres. The Stanley Dam is quite deteriorated, but impounds a significant section of the Town River and has a long fish ladder. The sluiceway is deteriorated and its mechanism is

frozen, but the dam still holds the water level close to the top of the stone culvert. There are no apparent working controls. See photos in Chapter V.

The Paper Mill Village Backwater above the ruins of the collapsed former milldam on the Taunton River just downstream of Mill Street is perhaps a vestigial pond. The mill-dam collapsed some years ago, but the remnant continues to raise the Taunton River a foot or two, causing a backwater and providing rapids enjoyed by some daring canoers. Since the rapids can be passed in a canoe and presumably present little obstacle to fish, it is understandable that some sources refer to the Taunton River as being un-dammed.



Backwater formed by dam remnants at Paper Mill Village

Vernal Pools The town's thirteen Certified Vernal Pools and many Potential Vernal Pools (PVPs) provide habitat for vernal pool species. These pools are good breeding habitat, especially for salamanders, frogs and other small amphibians because the seasonal natures of the pools prevent predator fish populations. Many pools are in clusters which provide extra habitat value since each pool is somewhat different and provides alternate habitats in different years and seasons.

While there are three certified vernal pools on the east side of Lake Nippenicket, they are found throughout the town as are the far more common PVPs. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) map of "Conservation Land, 1830s Forest, and PVPs" below shows that few of the pools appear to be on protected conservation land though there are clusters of PVPs on the Stiles and Hart land and around Carver's Pond.

Wetlands

The town has an estimated 3,048 acres in wetlands. These include 459.4 acres of non-forested wetlands such as streamside marshes and wet meadows, and extensive areas of wooded swamp. (The last are difficult to measure by aerial photography since they can look much like upland forests. However USGS sheets do have a separate pattern for wooded wetlands.) Some wetlands are along streams or contain streams as the state's largest, the Hockomock Swamp, does, while others are isolated. Very few are along the edge of the Taunton River because its banks are generally fairly steep.



Slow section of Taunton River above Plymouth Street (Rte.104) Bridge and vestigial Paper Mill Village dam; rapids going through undeveloped land below dam

D. Vegetation, Rare and Endangered Species

Sizable tracts of conifer forest and red maple and cedar swamps are found throughout the town. These offer important wildlife habitat and their upland portions offer hiking opportunities much of the year. Selective installation of boardwalks and removal of some trailside briars and brambles could increase these opportunities particularly during the wet seasons. Another, more basic, concern is keeping the areas large enough and/or well enough connected to give wildlife needed range.

**Table IV-1
Bridgewater Watersheds and Wetlands**

Watersheds	Acres	Square Miles	% of town	Number of Ponds	Acres of Ponds	% of area in Ponds	Acres in Wetlands	% of area in Wetlands
Lake Nip. & Upper Town River	4,652	7.27	26.6	3	370	8.2	1,355	29.1
Town and Upper Taunton River	1,735	2.71	9.9	0	0	0	81	4.7
South Brook Basin	2,272	3.55	13	3	42	1.8	226	9.9
Matfield River Basin	322	.5	1.8	0	0	0	11	3.4
Blood Pond Brook	417	.65	2/4	1	4	1	77	18.4
Spring and Beaver Brook	716	1.12	4.1	2	3	0.4	76	10.6
Saw Mill Brook	2,191	3.42	12.5	3	16	0.7	257	11.7
Snow's Brook	2,539	3.97	14.5	2	4	0.2	231	9.1
Other	2,622	4.1	15	3	48	1.3	734	24.2
	17,466	27.29		17	487		3,048	121.1

Sources: Bridgewater GIS /MassGis.

Fields Elsewhere there are some open fields (619 acres of pasture in 1999) offering grasslands depending on mowing practices. An example is the town-owned Wyman Meadow land discussed below. There are also small areas of fresh marsh with 459 acres of non-forested wetlands reported by MassGIS in 1999.

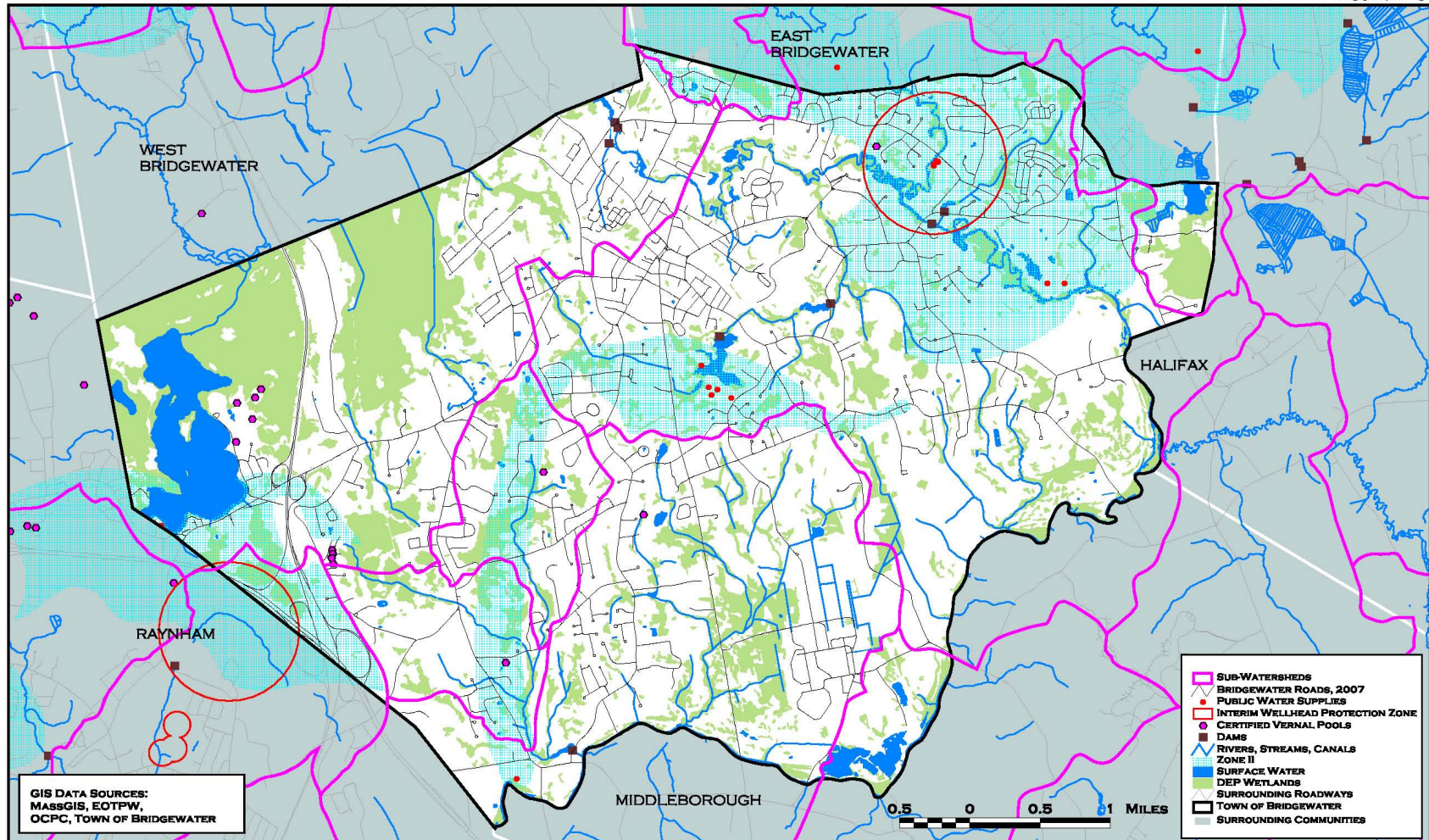
Wetlands Several rare communities of acidic fens, and white cedar swamps and bogs are found in the town's diverse Hockmuck swamp lands, and the Alluvial Atlantic White Cedar Swamp habitat occurs in spots along the Taunton River where it floods in the Spring and remains wet most of the year. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species (NHESP) Program notes that "Fortunately much of the land in and around the Hockomock where these occur is protected for conservation by the town and Commonwealth."

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

WATER RESOURCES



FIGURE IV - 3



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

SEPTEMBER, 2008

FIGURE IV - 3

Forests As noted above, 8,155 of the town's 18,181 acres (44.9%) are in the town's mixed hardwood and softwood forests. These are found in both uplands and wetlands. These extensive forests reflect untouched land and reforested former farmland. With increasing low-density development on both forest and farm land, solid blocks of forest are probable being lost more rapidly than new forest is replacing farmland.

While the acreage is impressive, many former solid blocks of forest are broken up by development along existing roads leaving few unbroken tracts of woodlands. Indeed, some of the mapped and tabulated forest is behind houses and surrounded by development. It is important to leave gaps in such development where wildlife may cross between isolated blocks of forest.

Another important factor affecting forest is whether the land, even reforested land, has ever been tilled. According to the NHESP, Primary Forest wood lots and wooded pastures "have greater biodiversity than areas that have been tilled. These are not Old Growth, they have been harvested and pastured, but the ground may not have been tilled....soil fauna and flora, micro-organisms and plants that reproduce primarily vegetatively contribute to the higher biodiversity. In addition, a variety (of) wildflowers are more common in untilled forests..."

Bridgewater is one of the towns which mapped lands in forest in the 1830s as mandated by the Legislature. The NHESP Program has compared these with more recent land use maps to identify possible remaining untilled forest. These areas, shown on the following NHESP map of Natural Communities and Primary Forests, are in the periphery of the town. One is south of Lake Nippenicket in a proposed retail complex; one is a red maple swamp just west of Route 24 and extending into West Bridgewater (largely Ch. 61B land and state land); another is along the East Bridgewater and Halifax town lines north of the Taunton River; and another is an irregular patch north of the Cumberland Farms land, across from the Wyman Meadow, and just northwest of the Lehtola Farm's Ch. 61a land. Some of this land is already developed or is under development pressure as shown by its removal from Ch. 61A. See Figure IV-4, Natural Communities and Primary Forest.

The NHESP notes that "The areas of 1830s forest on private land would be good targets for conservation acquisition to maintain the biodiversity of the town and region." Such data should be considered in setting priorities for protection in the Five Year Action Plan.

Street Trees/Shade Trees According to the Bridgewater Forestry Department the town has about 200 flowering decorative shade trees in the town center. These are primarily cherry trees and pear trees. The Forestry Department replaces about 10 a year when necessary. This is generally funded by the Bridgewater Improvement Association and the Mass Releaf Program through the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The department also sprays trees in the Central Square area and in several roadside planting areas for periodic pests such as the Winter Moths which eat buds and emerging leaves on certain host trees. In addition, the department also replaces a few roadside annually year when needed and when resources allow.

Rare and Endangered Plant Species The following draws on information from the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Bridgewater's rare plants are generally found in wetlands. The two species of orchid are found in historic records from along the Taunton River and Lake Nippenicket while Long's Bulrush is found in open wet meadows often maintained by fire, such as Acidic Graminoid (grassy) Fens and Sedge Meadows. The spectacular pink-and-yellow flowered Plymouth Gentian and the Round-fruited False-loosestrife grows on the wet shores of ponds and lakes and require fluctuating water levels to maintain their populations.

**Table IV-2
Rare Plant Species Documented in Bridgewater**

Scientific Name	Common Name	MESA Status	Most Recent Year Seen
Vascular Plants			
<i>Ludwigia Sphaerocarpa</i>	Round Fruited False-loosestrife	E	2005
<i>Platanthera ciliaris</i>	Orange Fringed Orchis	Historic	1970s
<i>Platanthera flava</i> var. <i>herbiola</i>	Pale Green Orchis	T	1912
<i>Sabatia Kenndyana</i>	Plymouth Gentian	SC	2005
<i>Scirpus longii</i>	Long's Bullrush	T	2003

E= Endangered T=Threatened SC=Special Concern Historic=No longer occurs in Massachusetts.
DL=Delisted See Priority and Estimated Habitats on Fig.IV-4

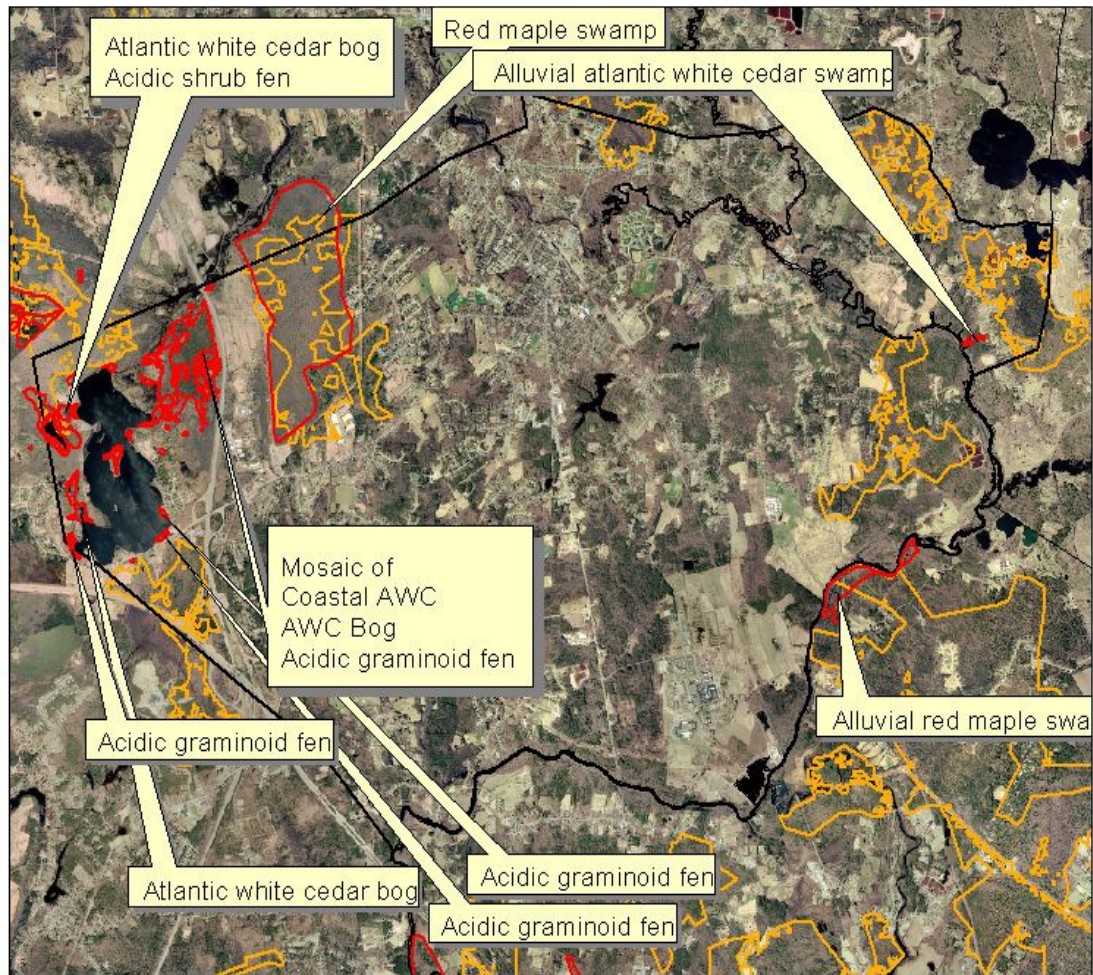
E. Fisheries and Wildlife, Rare and Endangered Species

Diverse wildlife habitat exists along the Town, Matfield and Taunton Rivers as well as along lesser brooks and streams and in varied upland areas. Habitat along the Town and Matfield rivers is limited by relatively high-density development while the Taunton River flows through the town's longest stretch of undisturbed habitats in Bridgewater. Yet the view from the canoe can be illusory. The river's riparian areas need to be protected vigorously as continuing nearby development can be disruptive even if outside of the Rivers Act's 200-foot buffer. This buffer is far less than that defined by the Wild and Scenic River Campaign.

Despite the limited buffer area, white-tailed deer, coyote, fox and wild turkey are plentiful here along with varied small mammals common to northeastern forests and wetlands. The migratory habits of some large mammals have changed with the 1998 commuter rail restoration leaving the fields along Summer Street bisected by a 6-foot high chain link fence. Yet these grasslands and farm fields are still a vital component of the regional habitats and flyway for migratory birds and the occasional Bald Eagle is seen. See Fig-IV-4, "Natural Communities and Primary Forest"

Figure IV-4

Natural Communities and Primary Forest Bridgewater



- NHESP Natural Communities
- Bridgewater Town Lines
- forested 1830 and 1999



Data Source: NHESP and MassGIS
Map printed August 22 2007

The greatest natural setting in the community remains the several hundred acres of land surrounding Lake Nippenicket. This nearly 500-acre great pond attracts a diversity of waterfowl, amphibians and mammals indigenous to the greater Hockomock Swamp. Other significant functioning reserves for wildlife are Carver's Pond, Ice Pond, Sturdevant's Pond, and Skeeter Mill Pond and their surrounding landscapes.

As far back as 1994 the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program's Watch List included 14 plants and animals in Bridgewater. The categories used are in descending order of risk are Endangered (E), Threatened (T), of Special Concern (SC) and Delisted (DL). Three plants were considered to be endangered and two others were "threatened" while only one animal, the Upland Sandpiper was considered to be endangered. The current situation is discussed below.

The joint West Bridgewater-Bridgewater Town River Fishery Committee was established by the two towns in 1994 for restoration, protection and management of the herring fishery while respecting competing needs for stream flow, and working to improve public viewing and catching areas. Fish ladders exist at the town-owned War Memorial Park dam in West Bridgewater and at the deteriorated privately-owned and maintained dam at Iron Works Park near High Street in Bridgewater. There are none on South Brook connecting the Town River to Skeeter Mill Pond and Carver's Pond. The need for such ladders and their cost/benefit require study.

Downstream from these sites the NRTB and Trout Unlimited have worked to protect wild and native trout streams in portions of the Old State Farm /BCC land.

Rare and Endangered Species Many of Bridgewater's rare animal species are associated with the town's extensive wetlands. The endangered Northern Red-bellied Cooters (nee Plymouth Red Belly Turtle) are the most aquatic local vertebrates, living in ponds and nesting in adjacent open beaches. Many wetland species like spotted salamanders, Wood Turtles, and Spotted Turtles use upland forests for most of their lives. Wood Turtles (SC) are found in large streams and rivers, adjoining forests. They spend more time in the water than the delisted Spotted Turtle (DL) or the Box Turtle (SC), but travel overland between rivers and to upland nesting places.

It is important to protect both the wetlands forests used by Spotted Turtles and the dry oak and pine forests used by Eastern Box Turtles along with the vernal pools and open, often sandy nesting areas which they all use.

The listed and delisted birds; Cooper's Hawk (DL), the Grasshopper Sparrow (T), Long-eared Owl (SC), Upland Sandpiper (E), and Barn Owl (SC) include species primarily found in grasslands and open areas near forest (using open land for hunting and forest for nesting and roosting). Bridgewater's remaining farm fields and the riparian areas along the rivers, particularly on the Old State Farm/BCC lands supply such habitat.

The town's rare invertebrates include freshwater mussels in the Taunton River and Lake Nippenicket, and two types of damselflies breeding in small ponds and living in nearby wetland and forests. Both require clean water. This suggests protecting the Town and Taunton Rivers with riparian buffers, ongoing pollution control (by the upgraded Brockton and Bridgewater waste water treatment plants) and flow maintenance. The flies are found in the mosaic of wetland types in the Hockomock swamp. These also provide habitat for the Water Willow Stem Borer Moth.

Table IV-3
Rare Animal Species Documented in Bridgewater

Scientific Name	Common Name	MESA Status	Most Recent Year
Vertebrates			
<i>Accipiter Cooperii</i>	Cooper's Hawk	DL	1978
<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i>	Spotted Salamander	DL	???
<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Grasshopper sparrow	T	1997
<i>Asio otus</i>	Long-eared Owl	SC	1997
<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	Upland Sandpiper	E	1980
<i>Clemmys Gupta</i>	Spotted Turtle	DL	2000
<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Wood Turtle	SC	2004
<i>Hemidactylium scutatum</i>	Four-toed Salamander	SC	2007
<i>Pseudemys rubriventris</i> pop. 1	Northern Red-bellied Cooter	E	2005
<i>Terrepenne Carolina</i>	Eastern Box Turtle	SC	2006
<i>Tyto alba</i>	Barn Owl	SC	1985
Invertebrates			
<i>Alasmidonta undulata</i>	Triangle Floater Mussel	SC	1999
<i>Crangonyx aberrans</i>	Mystic Valley Amphipod	DL	1989
<i>Engallagma laterale</i>	New England Bluet Fly	SC	1994
<i>Engallagma pictum</i>	Scarlet Bluet Fly	T	2004
<i>Leptodea ochracea</i>	Tidewater Mucket mussel	SC	1997
<i>Ligumia nasuta</i>	Eastern Pond Mussel	SC	1997
<i>Papaipema sulphurata</i>	Water-Willow Stem Borer	T	1994

E= Endangered T=Threatened SC=Special Concern Historic=No longer occurs in Massachusetts. DL=Delisted See Priority and Estimated Habitats on Fig.IV-4

Priority and Estimated Habitats, Bio Map areas and the Living Waters Core.

The NHES Program identifies and maps Priority Habitats and Estimated Habitats for rare and endangered species as well as BioMap areas and land in the Living Waters Core.

See Figure IV-4 following, “Natural Features and Protected Land.” This includes the contents of the separate NHESP maps of “Priority and Estimated Habitats”; “Conservation Land, 1830s Forest and PVPs;” and the “BioMap-Guiding Land Conservation for Diversity.”

The Estimated Habitats are wetland-related areas significant for rare wildlife. They are intended to be used in enforcing the Wetlands Protection Act while the slightly more inclusive Priority Habitats are the probable habitats of State listed rare species to guide protective activities. The combined areas cover the end of the town west of Route 24; a sizable area bracketing the Taunton River and extending into Halifax on the eastern end of the town; and another area running north of the river roughly along Route 18 to Forest Street/ Winter Street and including upland fields in the northeast corner of the BCC/Old State Farm lands.

As explained by the NHES Program, the more extensive BioMap and the Living Waters Cores “were produced... to identify the areas of most importance for biodiversity; they are based on known locations of rare species and uncommon natural communities, and incorporate the habitats needed by rare species to maintain the local populations. The BioMap focused on species of uplands and wetlands; Living Waters focused on aquatic species. Large un-fragmented conservation land provides the best opportunities to maintain populations of species and limit further species loss from the town.” Hence, protection of land adjacent to existing public or private open space locally and across town lines “is one way to provide important large areas of biodiversity protection.”

As can be seen on Figure IV-5; the identified BioMap area and “supporting Natural Landscape” cover much of the northwest and southeast corners of the town and generally include more than the Estimated and Priority Habitats. The Living Waters are mapped along the Taunton River to its junction with Halifax’s Winnetuxet River which is also mapped as Living Waters.

Inclusion in any of these four categories would increase the value of an area of conservation and recreation interest and add to its priority for acquisition or increased protection.

Wildlife Corridors

Bridgewater has vast areas supporting wildlife as shown in the BioMap areas, the Priority and Estimated Habitats and the Living Waters Core land on Figure IV-5 “Natural Features and Protected Lands” but as the map also shows, the largest ones are discontinuous. Thus the extensive areas of BioMap, BioMap Supporting Natural Landscape, and key Priority and Estimated Habitats around Lake Nippenicket and the easternmost portion of the Hockomock Wildlife Management Area are all north of Rte. 104 and west of Route 25, while their southern counterparts around the BCC land and Cumberland Farms land are south of Flagg Street, east of South Street and along the Taunton River almost to the Town River/ Matfield River junction.

The intervening lands are largely, though not entirely built up, impeding free movement of larger wildlife or putting others at risk as they forage through human neighborhoods. Some opportunities for enhancing corridors may exist along streams such as South Brook, Snow’s Brook, Spring Brook that starts south of the State Forest, and an un-named stream that runs

south from Route 104 east of Pleasant Street. Use of these assumes that streamside greenways for human use can work for wildlife too, at least after dark.

Possibilities for further study include:

(1) A corridor running along South Brook from the Town River through the State Forest, then through wooded swamp and uplands to Auburn St. and south along an un-named stream just east of Summer Street through Bridgewater Correctional Complex land to the Taunton River.

As an alternative, this corridor could swing east through the Cumberland Farms lands and run along the larger Spring Brook through BioMap lands to the Taunton River

(2) A greenway/corridor suggested for further study by the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB) would run south from Carver's Pond west of Conant Street to the wooded former town dump off Winter Street and then either:

- A. Go through intervening largely developed land to Flagg St. and on to the extensive BCC land the Taunton River lands; or:
- B. Go south from the Winter Street dump through rear lots to a 26-acre state holding starting north of Flagg St. and running south through a strip parallel to Bedford St and Conant Streets and then through intervening woodlands west of Conant St. and on to the BCC land.

The latter would be the more feasible by making good use of present state land.

(3) A wider wildlife corridor/greenway running south from Cottage Street, across a tributary to Carver's Pond, south behind the Willow Range Drive, Wally Kruger Way and Jennifer Circle development, across Winter Street, between the Chris John way and Fireworks Circle subdivisions, on across Colonial Drive, and on through undeveloped land along Sawmill Brook to the Taunton River. Fortunately none of the subdivisions connect Bedford Street and South St., so some passable land may be left between them.

(4) A significant connection would be between the east and west portions of the Hockomock Wildlife Management Area divided by Rte. 24. This would run along the Town River through Estimated and Priority Habitat and BioMap land, under Rte. 24 and on through comparable habitat and by many vernal pools to the northern end of Lake Nippenicket. This could depend on opportunities to increase the passageway under Route 24.

(5) An emerging protected corridor is that along the Town and Taunton Rivers. The present protected riverside lands along this corridor are:

- The Stiles and Hart Conservation Parkland
- The Ironworks Park,
- The Tuckerwood Conservation Parkland I
- The Pheasant Lane cluster open space across the Town River from Tuckerwood
- Wyman Meadow and closely linked Water Department lands

- The Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts (WTSEM) North Point Preserve next to Wyman Meadow
- The Town's inactive sand pit and riverside wildlands at the Halifax line
- The WSEM conservation restriction (CR) between Bridgewater Ave. and Dickens Street.
- The Titicut Conservation Parklands at the Raynham line and adjacent Water Department land, and the
- Estimated 6700 feet of BCC (Old State Farm) land protected under Article 97 of the State Constitution
- The town's Water Department land bracketing the junction of the Matfield, Town and Taunton Rivers

In addition there is:

- About 4300 feet of riverfront protected under a Conservation Restriction as part of the Child's Bridge cluster development across from and down the Taunton River from Wyman Meadow/ North Point
- About 4200 feet of Taunton River frontage on the Lehtola Farm being purchased by the WTSEM - reportedly across from significant state holdings
- The possibility of protecting about 4000 feet of very irregular Town River frontage as part of a town-approved mixed use expansion of the Waterford Village apartment development under Ch.40R, and.
- Much land under Chapter 61 along the eastern and southern portions along the Taunton River particularly just south of the BCC land as shown on Figure V-1.

These present and potential protected streamside land offer much possibility of a near continuous protected corridor from the Stiles and Hart land to the Raynham line. The length of the possible corridor offer much opportunity for stream-dependant species to move up and down the streams while its width gives good access to the upland and wetlands forests and Vernal pools used much of the time by salamanders, Box Turtles, Spotted Turtles, and Wood Turtles.

These various potential upland and streamside wildlife corridors all require further study with close attention to preserving needed connections between habitats. This calls for coordination with the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, developers, landowners and wildlife agencies. This is because it is crucial to be aware of various creatures' needs, and then to retain needed habitats and to preserve connections between or behind subdivisions. In many cases an Open Space Community Development approach would allow preservation of such **d** connections while allowing the desired degree of development.

E. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Landscapes The town's most compelling landscapes are its open fields, particularly along Summer Street through the inactive BCC/ Old State Farm, and Flagg Street soccer fields on BCC land, the riverside Lehtola Farm at the end of Auburn Street, the long view up Lake Nippenicket and many shorter views along the rivers from bridges, such as the view up the Matfield River from High Street. The extensive, inactive approximately 200-acre Cumberland Farm fields are significant despite being hidden from upland view by woodlands

and development, except from along Curve Street south of Auburn Street. This is because of the view from their approximately 2,400 feet of river frontage. This view is key part of the river's wild and scenic, yet sometimes pastoral character. Some views have been degraded by alterations such as the paved wellfield access drive bisecting the Wyman Meadow on rather than running along one side.

There are also closer-up developments such as the remaining farm fields and horse fence in front of the Harvest Lane development off of South Street. Other iconic landscapes are the fleeting view of the former McIntyre's farm field from Plymouth Street and the charming town center views of Central Square. The town's landscapes are discussed further under B "Landscape Character" above.

The town has a number of potential Scenic Ways proposed in the 1995 Open Space Plan. These include:

Auburn Street
Spruce Street
Summer Street (South of Flagg Street)
Elm Street (Northern portions)
Plymouth Street (East of Pond Street)
South Street (South of South Drive)
Lakeside Drive along the edge Lake Nippenicket

These roads have not been yet officially designated by Town Meeting according to the Town Clerk and the Planning Board.. Thus they do not have the protection offered by a mandatory Planning Board hearing before road- side trees can be cut or stonewalls may be altered. Yet they add to the town's character and should be protected. .

Characteristic Geologic Features and other Resources The town's main geologic feature is its virtual enclosure by the Town and Taunton Rivers. Opportunities to view them, to protect their water quality and to increase usable access are central to this plan and its recommendations. The town's two main hills, Great Hill on the BSC campus (157 feet above mean sea level [msl] and Sprague's Hill (170' feet msl) on the East Bridgewater line, could be pleasant viewing points except that each is dominated by a large water supply tank and is otherwise largely tree covered. However such opportunities might well be explored consistent with tank security since each is accessible by the water tank access road.

Hockomock Swamp Area of Critical Environmental Concern The 16,950- acre Hockomock ACEC was designated by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs in the 1990 after extensive research and advocacy led by Bridgewater residents concerned with the implications of potential commercial and residential growth, particularly around Lake Nippenicket.

In Bridgewater the ACEC includes the western end of the town west of Pine Street, and much land east of Route 24 about two thirds of the way to North Street. It includes much Ch. 61 B land and land in the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area. This is only a small portion of the ACEC which extends far into Raynham, Easton, Taunton, Norton and

West Bridgewater. The designation does not prevent development but it requires lower thresholds for jurisdiction and a higher standard of review than apply elsewhere.

Cultural, Archeological and Historic Sites. Bridgewater's cultural and historic sites are largely around the Central Square area. They have been discussed in Chapter III where all the major historic structures and places are listed. Native American archeological sites might be expected along the rivers and nearby fertile fields, but apparently the seasonal movements along the river system involved very few permanent settlements and left few artifacts.

In addition to the churches and former schools listed above, most notably the Academy Building and the Unitarian-Universalist Church with its Off the Common (folk music) Coffeehouse, the town's major cultural resource is Bridgewater State College. This is the flagship of the state college system and brings many classes, concerts, plays, athletic events and other cultural happenings to the town and the region. Bridgewater's Historic District around Central Square is shown on Figure III-2.

F. Environmental Problems

Environmental issues are often water related and the above-described zoning provisions for Aquifer Protection and Flood Plain management do much to limit problems from future development while the non-zoning local Wetlands Protection Bylaw goes a long way to extend the protection of the state's Wetlands Protection Act.

Reviewing the major areas of concern, the Town's Health Agent, Stanley Kravitz reports that there are no significant environmental problems or threats.

As in many communities the town's environmental issues include:

1. Protection of Drinking Water Supplies.

The present sources are covered by the Aquifer Protection bylaw, by specific processes like the Carver's Pond water treatment plant, by upgrading and expanding the Advanced Waste Water Treatment, by close attention to on-site sewage disposal systems, and by increased use of protective Low Impact Development strategies. The town's Aquifer Protection Bylaw reflects new DEP standards and includes Zone II areas of adjacent communities.

On-site septic systems meet the needs of most development in all but the sewered areas. Generally these systems pose few environmental problems and they have the benefit of recharging the groundwater. Still there can be isolated areas where poorly-drained soils or excessively well-drained soils and/or a high water table make subsurface disposal less effective, or where nitrate, phosphorous or sodium levels may be excessive for human health, or for the health of the stream and pond systems.



The Matfield River just above the High Street Bridge

However the health agent reports that at least 2000 of the town's remaining estimated 3500 septic systems have been built or rebuilt with the last 9 years and present few problems of concentrated failing systems. Instead, there are scattered problem spots, usually close to water bodies. These are examined in the town's 2001 Comprehensive Waste Water Management Plan, and potential regional solutions are being examined in the on-going Upper Taunton Basin Waste Water Evaluation Study.

Low Dissolved oxygen and high nutrient levels in the Matfield River were tested by Prof. Kevin Curry's Water Access Laboratory at Bridgewater State College from 1995-2005, and the rankings of the major water bodies have been discussed above. These contaminants can affect drinking water supplies if they are quite close to the wells, but Bridgewater's supplies are considered to be sufficiently distant from such sources.

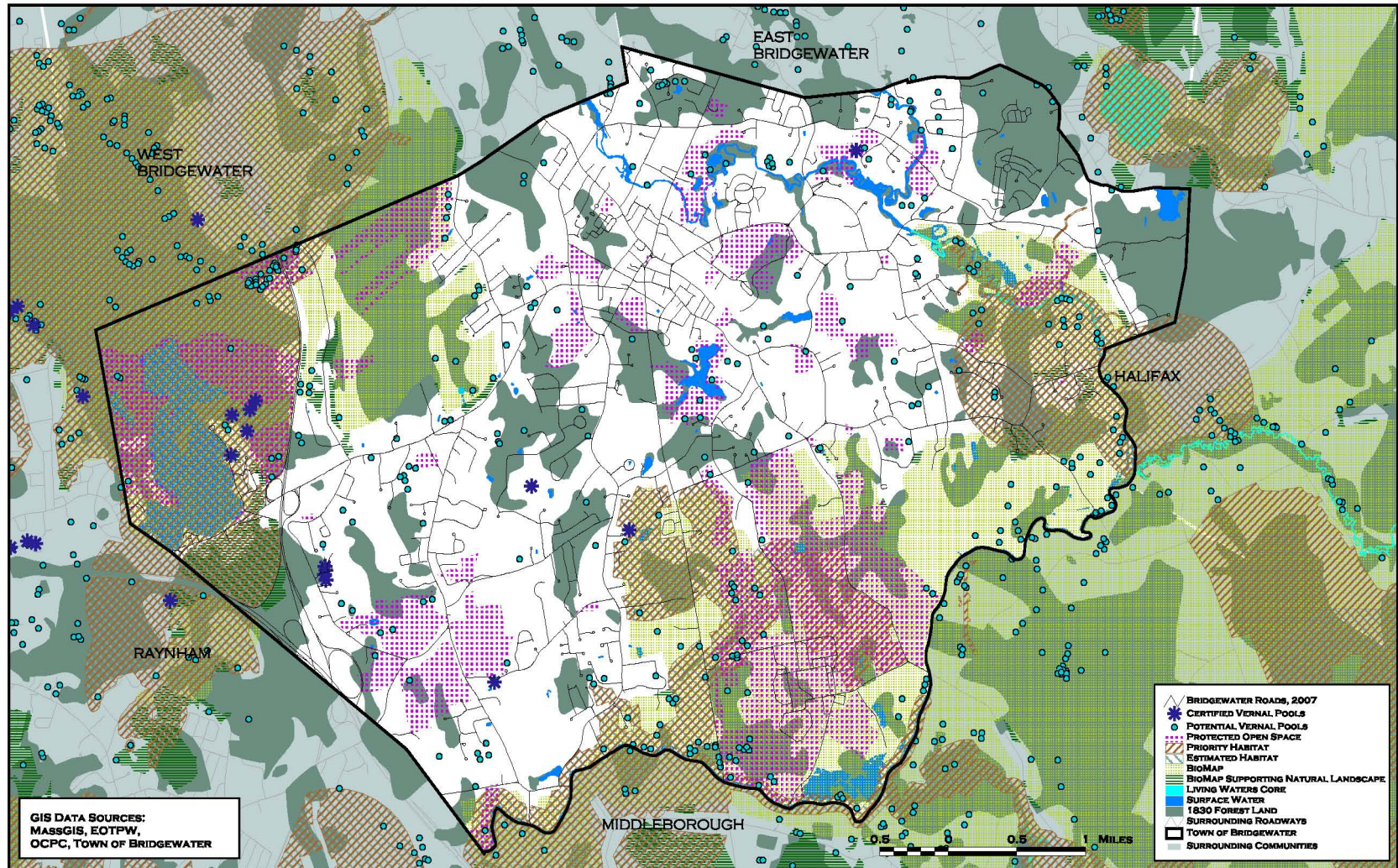
Old landfills can be a problem but the health agent reports that the capped but unlined former town landfill at Conant and Winter Streets presents no problems because the groundwater flows south, away from the Carver Pond wells. In addition, in its later years the site was a "burned landfill" in that waste was burned in cells before they were covered,

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

NATURAL FEATURES & PROTECTED LANDS



FIGURE IV-5



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

SEPTEMBER, 2008

FIGURE IV-5

leaving very little to decay and produce harmful leachate. (This assumes that no non-degradable harmful materials were originally put in the landfill.)

The BCC to the south formerly was self-sufficient with on-site wells. These were closed when the facility tied into the City of Taunton system about 15 years and no problems were found. The health agent also reports that the commercial Chuckran landfill to the south off Rte.18 also presents no problems. The owner maintains monitoring wells around the site and the results are reviewed by DEP.

2. Protection of key habitats

Nitrate, Oxygen, and Nutrient levels. In the past, nitrogen loading has been a major problem at Lake Nippenicket, but more recently there has been greater concern with sedimentation and eutrophication. These are also increasingly evident in the town's other major ponds, Carver's Pond and Skeeter Mill Pond. These are thought to partially reflect nearby failing septic systems.

As noted elsewhere, the Matfield River showed low oxygen levels and high nutrient levels when tested by the Water Access Laboratory at Bridgewater State College from 1996 to 2005. Upgrading of the upstream Brockton wastewater treatment plant is expected to improve the situation.

Aquatic Vegetation. A related need is management of invasive aquatic vegetation or marine life in those ponds since these can heighten eutrophication and threaten native species. One action is the signing of the Town River Landing canoe/kayak boat launching area warning users to clean off boats and equipment before moving from one stream or pond to another.

Forest Health According to the Highway and Forestry Superintendent Bridgewater presently has no major infestations affecting its trees other than periodic Winter Moth or Gypsy Moth infestations. The European Winter Moths were first noticed in Nova Scotia in the 1930s and now range through coastal Massachusetts from Gloucester to Orleans on the Cape and a few areas to the west and south of the turnpike. The larvae hatch when the temperatures average 55 degree and begin eating buds and leaves on many local trees and shrubs including apples, elm, maple, ash, crabapple, cherry, and blueberry until mid-June. There are no local natural controls, but UMASS is collecting and breeding a parasitic fly that has been effective elsewhere.

The Superintendent notes that the extremely destructive Asian Long Horned Beetle found in the Worcester area has not progressed far in this direction.

3. Flooding

According to Highway Superintendent Andrew Bagas, frequent, relatively minor flooding requiring temporary road closures occurs along South Brook at Skeeter Mill Pond on Water Street, at Water and Wood Streets, and at Hayward Street; on Snow's Brook at Cross Street; and on the Matfield River at Bridge Street. These have resulted in no or very minimal property damage.

Development in the flood hazard areas is often limited by the terrain and by regulation through the town's Flood Plain Zoning Bylaw, the Rivers Protection Act, and the Wetlands Protection Act. The minimal risks and damage so far are shown by the fact that the town has 58 flood insurance policies in force, but had only 4 claims totaling \$5,119, with payments averaging \$1,280, from 1978 to 2004.

Some of these losses could be reduced and others be prevented by careful management of selected town dams to lower pond levels before a big storm and then slowly release water after the storm, as discussed later. Use of low impact development (LID) principles maximizing recharge and storm water storage and reducing runoff could also help to lessen flood damages. For further information see the Council's 2005 Regional Multi-Hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan and its Bridgewater Annex.

4. Erosion and Sedimentation

As noted above, Highway Superintendent Bagas reports that stream or pond sedimentation from agricultural or construction erosion is not a significant problem. Construction erosion is limited largely because the land is largely level and because most projects involving excavation and grading are required to use straw bales, settling basins and other sedimentation control measures. Agricultural erosion and sedimentation are also limited because most cultivated farmland is separated from streams and ponds by bands of varied natural vegetation which trap water-borne sediment.

One remaining concern is streamside erosion caused by inappropriate bank alterations. To prevent this the Management Plans for the riverside parklands generally discourage bank alterations for canoe/kayak landings where such erosion might occur.

5. Clean Up and Monitoring of Hazardous Waste Sites

The following describes sites in Bridgewater and their status.

Bridgewater has 112 - 21E sites as summarized below. These sites have summary codes.

The key codes are:

NDS = Not a Disposal Site according to DEP

NFA = DEP finding that No Further Action is needed

RAO = Response Action Outcome, a statement filed by the owner or its agent that no significant risk or substantial hazards remain.

Tiers 1A, 1B, 1C and 2 = Sites ranging from the most severe to the least. 1A requires a clean-up permit and direct DEP supervision of responses while 2 requires no permit or DEP approval.

Pre-Classified = Not yet classified

Hours/Days = required response time; the shorter, the riskier.

The Reportable Release Look-Up Table as of 12/20/07 lists 112 sites. All but 21 reflect oil alone or list no type of contaminant. The twenty one are listed as "hazardous material" or "oil and hazardous material" combined.

Of the 112 sites, 65 are reported as RAO, three are labeled as “RTN Closed,” 10 are rated as low risk Tier 1-D and Tier 2, and two were listed as “Adequate.” Of all these sites, it is notable that the best known, the Cannon Engineering site of near Rte. 24 has been cleaned up to an “Adequate” level.

Of the remaining undefined sites, two have no reported response times after clean-up of episodes in the late 1980s; one undefined site of a 1997 event at the old highway barn; and two “unclassified” sites all have lower-risk 72-hour to 120-day response times, as does the site of a 1995 event at a MHD rest area.

Finally, one site has a 2-hour response time because the owner has an adjacent private well. This is a dry cleaning site where the released solvents have been breaking down to less harmful forms and it is being monitored. In all, the health agent reports that Bridgewater has no serious hazardous waste sites.

6. Environmental Justice / Environmental Equity

As discussed in Chapter III, Environmental Justice (EJ) intends that “low income and minority communities should neither be subject to disproportionate hazards and negative impacts of development nor be denied proportionate access to public facilities, services and various amenities.” Environmental equity goes further in seeking equal treatment of neighborhoods and access to amenities community-wide.

The map, “Bridgewater-Environmental Justice” (Figure III-6) reflects income and racial patterns to identify the vulnerable “Environmental Justice Neighborhoods” in terms of census tracts as discussed in Chapter III. As observed there and shown by comparison of the Environmental Justice map (Fig. III-6), the map of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest (Fig.V-1), and the Five Year Action Plan (Fig V-1), there are many existing and proposed open space and recreational areas in or abutting the EJ neighborhood.

The southern portion of the neighborhood contains much protected open land and agricultural land on or near the BCC grounds, and abuts areas of special interest along the Taunton River. Many of these lands of special interest are proposed for study and potential protection in the Five Year Action Plan.

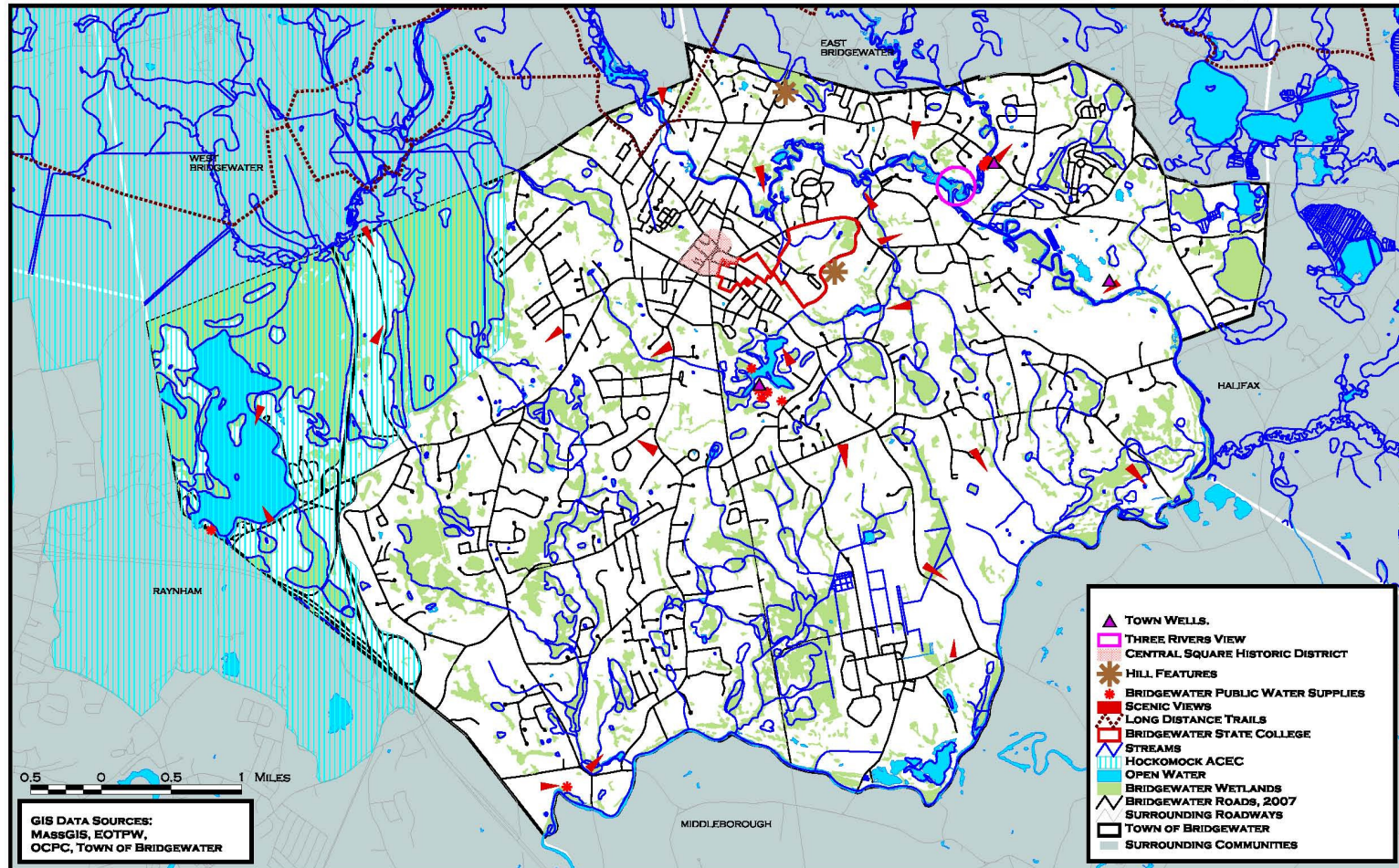
The more developed northern portion of the EJ neighborhood includes the Mitchell Elementary school and its playgrounds; abuts the major Legion Field complex; is very near the new Crescent Street/Hogg Farm/Starr Park complex to the west, and the State Forest and related town holdings to the east; and wraps around the Carver’s Pond holdings. While the area’s resources are already major, the Carver’s Pond holdings and recreation facilities are proposed for expansion, and other protected areas are proposed at the nearby Skeeter Mill Pond (Flynn’s Pond”) and along South Brook. Thus the Environmental Justice Neighborhood is and will remain well-served with open space and recreation areas.

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

SCENIC RESOURCES
& UNIQUE ENVIRONMENTS



FIGURE IV - 6



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

OCTOBER, 2008

FIGURE IV - 6

Looking at town-wide Environmental Equity issues, it can be seen that the largest concentration of usable open space (the Lake Nippenicket holdings, the Olde Scotland Links golf course, and a portion of the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area) is in the western end of the town since that is where those resources are. However, the more intensely used sports-oriented sites are in the center of town and the multi-purpose riverside holdings (the Stiles and Hart, Ironworks, Tuckerwood and Wyman Meadow Conservation Parklands and the Wildlands Trust's North Point Preserve) run from the north-central to the near-easternmost sections of the town.

Again, reviewing Figures V-1 and IX-1 shows that while most potentially acquired Ch. 61, 61A and 61B lands are on scattered agricultural sites west of Bedford Street, the biggest Ch. 61A sites are in the east largely along the Taunton River, as are the greatest number of the sites proposed for study and possible riverside acquisition.

Another source of local open space is the land preserved in cluster ("Open Space Community") developments. Three of these (Dundee Drive off Vernon St.; Harvest Lane ("Home Nook") off South Street and Paul Joseph Lane/Red Mill Road west of Vernon Street) are in the western portion of town while one, Pheasant Lane off Hayward Street is in the northeast.

In addition the forthcoming Child's Bridge Open Space Community subdivision at the former Perkins Farm on the Taunton River (UPL-4) is planned to have 70.5 acres of preserved streamside land under a Conservation Restriction. This will not be open to the general public, but it will protect riverside land habitat, and preserve the landscape as viewed from the River and from across the River.

Of the present clusters, all but the low, marshy Pheasant Lane site have some useable upland. The Dundee Drive and Paul Joseph Lane lands are owned by the town while the others belong to a developer or a homeowners group. Those like Dundee Drive and Home Nook that abut public land or land of special interest might have the potential to be integrated with the adjoining land thereby increasing the usefulness of each, if required in the Planning Board's Special Permit and acceptable to the developer and residents. The equity issue becomes more sensitive where town-owned cluster land like that at Paul Joseph Lane is surrounded by private land and is inaccessible to the nearby neighborhoods. In such cases the issues of conflicting public interest, optimum use of open space, and privacy need to be resolved if personal privacy and environmental equity are to be reconciled.

In all, Bridgewater's Environmental Justice and Environmental Equity issues are very limited and such equity will increase under the proposed Five Year Action Program. .

7. Development Impacts

The possible impacts of development can take many forms, some of them irreversible, but there are many ways to counter them or to mitigate them.

Increased storm runoff leading to potential flooding and lowered groundwater can result from increased impervious surfaces. These effects are inevitable with development, but vary with the details of storm water management e.g., whether a road or parking lot drains directly to a small stream or to a ponding area allowing absorption and slow release. The effects can be reduced through application of the state's Stormwater Regulations and use of methods such as Low Impact Development (LID). This limits runoff to predevelopment levels through techniques including the use of rain gardens, grass swales, recharge basins, grass pavers, leaching catchbasins or similar mechanisms slowing runoff or recharging it close to its origin. These can be enforced through tools such as stormwater regulations, subdivision rules and regulations, special permit requirements and Conservation Orders of Conditions. Bridgewater's small streams and ponds and its many wetlands offer opportunities to reverse these effects by retrofitting existing development and by applying LID principles to probable new development.

Increased water consumption with development may be inevitable overall, but with conservation and system improvements consumption per capita can drop even in the face of growth. Thus Bridgewater's total consumption rose from 1.41 Million Gallons /Day-MGD) in 1995 to 1.73 MGD in 2007. At the same time consumption per capita dropped from 80.4 gallons/capita/day in 1995 down to 64.24 g/c/d in 2007. This is even lower than the state guideline of 65 g/c/d. None-the-less total consumption continues to grow. Fortunately, with the recent increase in safe yields and its continuing efforts to expand supplies the Water Department does not expect water supply to be a significant development constraint or burden on the townspeople for the foreseeable future.

Decreased water quality with inadequate wastewater management is a potential concern in any growing community. However, as noted above, Bridgewater's present sources are protected by Aquifer Protection zoning, by specific facilities like the Carver's Pond water treatment plant, by upgrading and expanding the Advanced Waste Water Treatment Plant, by closely regulating on-site sewage disposal systems, and by increased use of protective Low Impact Development strategies. The town's Aquifer Protection Bylaw reflects new DEP standards and includes Zone II areas of adjacent communities. For the longer run as growth outstrips local treatment and disposal options, Bridgewater is participating in the ongoing DEP - financed Upper Taunton Basin Regional Wastewater Evaluation Project. This is exploring potential long-term regional solutions to needs over the entire Upper Basin.

Increased land consumption with low density development is inherent in the town's present zoning and common market forces. As has been noted elsewhere, land consumption has risen much more rapidly than population growth over the past few decades. This because most new houses are in outlying areas and occupy an acre or more while households in many older neighborhoods consume a quarter acre or less.

The exceptions are in the town's two major apartment developments, and in Open Space Community (cluster) developments. However, the present zoning does not allow new multi-family projects except under Chapter 40R which as been mapped over the Waterford Village complex. This will allow considerably more housing there at about 20 units /acre subject to a

special permit. As discussed earlier, the 40R zoning will allow some efficient higher-density housing and compatible retail uses according to “Smart Growth” principles, while also offering an opportunity to preserve some open space along the site’s extensive Town River frontage.

The Open Space Community Developments (OSCDs) allow smaller lots and higher densities in their developed section so long as there are no more units overall than under conventional development. They then preserve the saved land as open space. Thus, while they require as much land as conventional development, they do leave much of that land in open space. They do not lessen gross land consumption since the saved land is not available for other uses, but they do leave the land in recreation, habitat or other open space-related uses.

While they use land more efficiently, OSCDs do not necessarily control sprawl within the community because the OSCD projects may well be located in outlying areas. Local examples are Harvest Lane off South St., Dundee Drive and Cobblestone Lane off Vernon Street, and the Maura Drive project west of South Street in the southern end of the town. These developments and their resulting open spaces are discussed in Chapter V.

Increased land value constraining preservation follows increased land consumption. This could be particularly true in the more developable sewered areas. However the few acquisitions proposed in such areas tend to be on relatively unbuildable land such as that at the junction of the Matfield and Town Rivers. Possible responses to rising land values are:

- Use of additional resources such as Community Preservation Act funds and state and federal aid through the state LAND (ex-Self Help) and PARC (ex- Urban Self Help) programs, and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program.
- Joint efforts with groups such as the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts, the Trustees of Reservations, The Nature Conservancy or the Trust for Public Land.
- Acquiring less than a fee interest such as conservation restrictions (CRs) leaving the owner some use of the land while reducing property taxes
- Seeking donations to the town of surplus land from large projects, or of the preserved open space in Open Space Community Developments.
- Seeking donations from owners who could benefit from income tax savings

Lost views of open back land can result from Form A (Subdivision Approval Not Required or ANR) development along existing roads, particularly if houses are sited parallel to the road rather than at right angles to it. This can be seen in the Whitman Street/Hayward Street area and elsewhere.

Under present Massachusetts zoning and subdivision control provisions communities have little discretion over Form A lots so long as they meet minimum area requirements, the buildings meet minimum yard standards, and the road (accepted or not) is found to be adequate. Possible remedies are statutory revisions proposed by recent the Massachusetts Land Use Regulation Reform effort (MLRA) and the current land Use Partnership Act.

One other approach would be adoption of advisory guidelines encouraging builders to respect views when sitting houses. Another approach would be zoning offer a density bonus to builders doing small subdivisions in place of a given number of Form A lots. This would

save the streetscape, but possibly at the cost of using backland of significant agricultural value. A similar incentive for commercial development is in the South Business District along Bedford Street. This requires 40,000-square feet for lots fronting on Bedford Street, but only 10,000 square feet for lots in subdivision.

Increased traffic on arterials and collector streets may seem inevitable but it can be lessened by concentrating development where transit is available, possibly through Transit Oriented Development, (TOD), or through flexible road network design. This refers to avoiding situations where all traffic uses a few major roads because much development is in isolated subdivisions designed as large cul de sacs. This common pattern has the advantage avoiding through traffic on local streets but it makes local trips to nearby neighborhoods and facilities longer than necessary by preventing direct movement between them. Instead people must now drive on round about routes over major streets.

The present pattern also allows few alternative routes when the major roads are clogged or blocked by an accident and gives such neighborhoods an isolated feeling, especially to non-drivers of all ages. Connections between neighborhoods would reduce local traffic by allowing short car trips and increased walking or bicycling to nearby neighborhoods and local destinations.

If allowing through car movement is unacceptable, much could still be accomplished by connecting neighborhoods with an ultimate town-wide system of bicycle and pedestrian paths. This alone would reduce driving by removing the need for circuitous driving for local trips that can be walked or pedaled. Such a system would allow children to get to friends' houses without being driven by parent and would increase opportunities for beneficial walking to school. This is discussed further in Chapter VII, Goals and Objectives.

Lost "Town Character"/Diminished landscape quality Some lost character is inevitable as continuing development turns farms into subdivision and public facilities; commerce removes historic houses and farm land; ; the view from the road becomes one of houses on frontage lots, and businesses – even ones which could strengthen the Center - spread out along major roads. However, some of these impacts can be lessened through the town's development regulatory power following approaches recommended in recent and past Master Plans and by the use of Smart Growth concepts as found in the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Smart Growth/Smart energy Toolkit produced by the Horsley Witton Group.

These Smart Growth principles as outlined by the Vision 20/20 Partnership for Southeastern Massachusetts and the Commonwealth's related Sustainable Development Principles include:

- Concentrating compact development and redevelopment to better use land and resources and to offer easy access to services and facilities while preserving outlying areas.
- Building on existing infrastructure,
- Allowing complementary mixed uses
- Minimizing storm runoff and maximizing groundwater recharge
- Restoring and enhancing the environment by preserving open space, critical environmental areas, farm land and places of natural beauty
- Preserving a strong sense of place
- Conserving resources

- Provide transportation choices
- Planning Regionally

Relevant recommendations from the recent Bridgewater Master Plan by the firm of Dufresne-Henry include:

- Encourage better cluster development
- Target higher density and senior housing near commercial centers, transit and parks
- Create neighborhoods with well-defined edges and centers
- Provide high quality public spaces
- Improve neighborhood accessibility to desired activities
- Concentrate commercial development in compact districts
- Establish upland buffers around retained wetlands and water bodies
- Create a street network with multiple connections and relatively direct routes
- Provide good networks for pedestrians and bicycles
- Reduce and concentrate the land zoned for retail development
- Provide for alternative development and design measures through new regulations encouraging traditional neighborhood development and improving the cluster bylaw, and by modifying zoning and subdivision regulations to improve the accessibility, amenities and environmental sensitivity of conventional subdivisions.

One recent constructive approach is the Child's Bridge Open Space Community development planned on the riverside Perkins Farm. This will keep most of the houses well back from the Taunton River and preserves relatively deep frontage on the river with a conservation restriction. While the land will not be open to the general public, the plan preserves its habitat value and its scenic value from the houses and from the river. Thus it will protect some of the land of conservation and recreation interest on Figure V-1.

In all, applying the principles and policies reviewed above and acting on many of the recommendations of this plan could do much to preserve Bridgewater's traditional character and landscape.

V. Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

Introduction/ Purpose and Degrees of Protection

The following describes Bridgewater's lands of habitat, scenic, water resource, recreation and conservation interest, whether protected, partially protected, or unprotected. It is intended to help to guide the town's actions in protecting land for broadly-defined open space and recreation purposes.

The protection of such land is important if the community is to remain a place where wildlands are around the corner and nature is still present. More specifically it is important if we are to:

- Keep significant open space available to many neighborhoods
- Preserve major open spaces, habitats and natural resources such as the fields along the Taunton River and areas of Primary Forest which has never been tilled.
- Protect key resources, especially water resources
- Give children exposure to nature
- Maintain part of the town's traditional rural character
- Enable the connection of widely separated holdings,
- And, to a lesser extent, to help to guide the town's development by creating permanent greenways.

There are various degrees of protection. As used here:

High Protection ("in Perpetuity") refers to land held for conservation, recreation or wildlife protection purposes and appropriately deeded to the Conservation or Recreation Commission, to a state agency or to a non-profit land-holding agency and/or protected by a binding conservation restriction or agricultural protection restriction, or to a lesser extent by inclusion in the state Constitution's Article 97.

Moderate or Limited Protection ("Temporary") refers to land held by public agencies for other purposes such as water supply or education and protected as long as it is needed for the basic purpose. Examples would be water supply lands, school sites, or state college and correctional facilities which could be vacated and sold for other purposes if no longer needed.

Low ("Minimal") This refers to miscellaneous town holdings serving no public purpose, commonly acquired through tax title takings and available for sale.

Unprotected ("at Immediate Risk") This refers to publicly or privately-owned undeveloped land whose uses do not provide even the most temporary protection.

These categories are made more complicated by the provisions of Chapters 61, 61A and 61B and the effects of Article 97.

The Chapter 61 provisions allow owners of Classified Forest, Farm Land, and Recreation

land to be taxed based on the land's value in its present use, rather than at its speculative "highest and best use". In exchange the owner gives the community (or a designated non-profit or public agency) a "right of first refusal" if the site is proposed for a change in use or offered for sale. This allows the community or agency to buy it by meeting the terms of any bona fide offer. This is often treated as a form of protection but it has no effect unless the community chooses to act and is able to act (alone or through a designee). Thus its significance is for the opportunities it offers.

Article 97 requires votes of the local government and a two-thirds vote of the General Court before broadly-defined "parklands" may be converted to other uses. Through the efforts of the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB), the General Court applied such protection to the peripheral, southern and riverside portions of the Bridgewater Correctional Complex (ex MCI Bridgewater) known as the Old State Farm. In response, the MassGIS map of Protected Land shows these areas as protected in perpetuity.

Communities may also be required to replace farmland or protected land converted to other uses (particularly if acquired with public assistance) either in-kind, or with a comparable payment.

A. Unprotected Private Holdings

1. Lands Under Current Use Taxation

The town now has approximately 1,727.3 acres or 2.7 square miles under Chapter 61, (Forest), Chapter 61A (Agriculture) or Chapter 61B (Recreation) current-use taxation. This is a significant amount but it is considerably less than there was a few years ago as all or portions of large farms in the eastern portion of the town have been removed from the program.

Current Use Taxation taxes property at its value in its present use rather than at its speculative value for development. If the land is taken out of the program the owner must pay a portion of the taxes saved, but after a few years this amount is far less than the savings. If the land is removed from the program for a change in use, the owner must inform the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. These agencies then have first refusal rights to match any bona-fide offer within 120 days. Since it is difficult for communities to respond in that time they may delegate their first refusal rights to a nonprofit entity such as the Trust for Public Land, or a public agency such as the State Department of Conservation and Recreation or the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. An owner may also take the land out of the program, pay the back taxes and later convert to another use without having to offer it to the community. The program does not prevent land sales but does lessen tax pressures on owners to sell in the near future.

The lands remaining in the program are in 34 parcels or groups of parcels as shown on Figure V-1 "Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest. The largest holdings are in the eastern end of the town. These are the Morse Bros.' 129.9 acres of cranberry bogs and support land off Plymouth Street Extension on the Halifax line; the Lehtola Farm's 349.2

acres of cropland and woods on the Taunton River along Auburn St.; and the Stiles and Hart company's 169.9 acres of woodlands and active brick works on the Taunton River east of South Street and abutting some Bridgewater Correctional Complex (BCC) holdings.

The largest site on the western edge the town is the 263 .7-acre Ouimet holdings of wooded swamp and recreation land just south of the state's Hockomock Swamp land.

As the map shows, the other 944.9 acres are scattered through 32 parcels or groups of parcels in the central and southern portions of the community. These are often close to, or abut neighborhoods or other public holdings such as the Chaffee Farm, or those on Carver's Pond. These parcels offer valuable opportunities to provide permanent open space next to or near many neighborhoods.

The table below summarizes and interprets the recent field survey by the Open Space Committee. Strong recommendations for multiple open space values have been interpreted as "Protect Actively" meaning take the initiative in contacting the owner even before a Ch. 61 offering. The Committee's descriptions and full recommendations are in Appendix A.

Table V-1

Land in Current Use Taxation under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B - FY 2009

Survey ID #	Map/parcel	Owner	Area- Acres	Committee Recommendations
1.	59-9	Ouimet	263.3.	Protect if offered, Assign rights to DCR, DFG
2.	46-126	P. Murray	37.0	Keep as agriculture; support APR, other actions
3.	46-15	Needs	25.2	Keep in agriculture, use APR, etc. protect if offered
4.	60-4	Hanson	12.5	Leave as a single-family house
5.	72-48	Andruk	21.5	Continue protection as wetland
6.	72.58	Ferrari	24.3	Protect if offered
7.	117-14	Auglis	10.5	Partially developed, protection not Recommended

8.	99-77	Chaves c/o Flaherty	49.5	Reconsider in future
9.	86-2, 60, 61, 72	Wood	10.7	Continue protection as wetland
10.	73-22, 108, 22; 60-10	Chaffee	72.6	Keep active farm with APR, CPA etc
11.	10-73, 74,170	Flaherty	17.9	Protect actively, many values
12.	62-13	Wood	15.7	Protect as wetland
13.	48-25	Wood	14.7	Protect as wetland and potential Zone II
14.	61-166,167; 74-6, 84	Wood	6.6	Now developed
15.	73-23	Wood	11.3	Continue protection as wetlands
16.	74-10	Leach	16.9	Protect actively
17.	74-39; 75-25, 26	Leach	65.8	Protect actively
18.	88-10, 66; 101-4, 5	Wood	64.5	Protect actively a potential multi-use area
19.	88-14	Pad	14.6	Continue protection as wetlands
20.	119, 56, 58	Kravitz	29.7	Protect actively for multiple values
21.	119-19	Beninati	8.5	No findings
22.	126-7	Stiles and Hart	37.6	Protect actively for multiple values
23.	120-6, 7, 28	Wood	20.0	Protection not recommended
24.	102-3, 4, 6	Curtin	25.1	Protect actively for multiple values
25.	63-48, 87, 88	Nelson	6.1	Continue 61A, protect if offered

26.	122-2; 129-1, 2; 134-5	Stiles and Hart	170	Protect actively for many values
27.	50-40, 92	Dantono	11.7	Protection is question able; near State Forest and housing
28.	37-11	Tunewicz	7.7	Protection is not recommended
29.	122-10	Wood	10.1	Protect actively
30.	27-6; 40-7, 8	Morse Bros.	129.9	Continue protection as bogs
31.	67-3	Perkins	143.7	Protect actively for many values (Childs Bridge cluster project with a conservation restriction has been approved.)
32.	89-3	Doherty	6.3	Protect if offered
33.	60-8	Chaffee	2.1	Keep active farm, APR, CPC.
34.	80, 4, 9, 10, 11.29 93-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Lehtola	349.2	Protect actively for many values
35.	61-47, 98,160	Wood	10.5	Continue protection as wetlands
36.	132-5	Flaherty	24.4	Protect actively for multiple riverside values



The Lehtola Farm Barn



Lehtola Farm fields running along an abandoned portion of Auburn Street down to the Taunton Rive and a closed bridge

2. Private Unprotected Parcels Significant for Water Resource Protection

The areas most important for water supply protection are those shown as Zone Two areas on the Water Resources map in Chapter IV, on the Zoning Map in Chapter III, and on the maps of soils with a high recharge potential or severe septic limitations in Chapter III. As observed in Ch. IV “... the areas with a high recharge potential are so frequent and scattered that it would not be practical or necessary to try to protect them all through ownership. Thus Bridgewater should not rely upon landownership and land protection to maintain recharge quality.” Instead it should emphasize limiting runoff and increasing recharge with approaches such as Low Impact Development and extensive use of retention ponds and detention ponds.”

3. Priority Land for Rare Species Protection

These are discussed above in Chapter IV, and shown on the maps of Estimated and Priority Habitats and those of the BioMap and Living Waters areas, along with those of Natural Communities and Certified and Potential Vernal Pools (PVPs). The largely peripheral distribution of Priority and Estimated Habitats and of the BioMap areas and the scattered town-wide distribution of PVPs are discussed there. These add to the priorities for acquisition and protection of selected areas of particular interest discussed later.

4. Other Unprotected Private Lands of Interest

These are discussed in more detail in Chapter VIII, Goals and Objectives, in Chapter IX Five Year Action Plan, and in Appendix B, “Areas Potentially Affected by above Goals and Objectives and the Five Year Action Plan. They include:

- Remaining private land around Lake Nippenicket
- Remaining portions of the Hockomock Swamp land
- Improve access to the Pheasant Lane common land
- Streamside open field portions of riverside farm land across from protected Department of Fish and Game land in Middleboro
- Streamside portions of partially-wooded farm land across from the town’s Wyman Meadow and the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts holdings
- Streamside Matfield River lands south of the High Street Water Department land including the junction of the Town and Matfield Rivers (along a powerline) where the Taunton River starts; an needed signing or improvements to the right of way to the stream junction at Three Rivers Farm reportedly granted to the Conservation Commission in the late1980s or early 1990s. .
- Selected private lands around Carver’s Pond
- The two wooded parcels west of the Aldrich Street possibly allowing a wildlife corridor across North Street to the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area through a small intervening parcel
- Stream-side Ch. 61A lands just south of Summer Street
- A portion of the streamside Stiles and Hart 61A land on either side of BCC lands
- The Ch.61A parcels and private parcels potentially completing a corridor partly along the powerline from the Toole Land to the Olde Scotland Links.
- Private land at Skeeter Mill Pond (“Flynn’s Pond”) - only if needed for permanent protection
- Land from town-owned Emerald Lane to northwestern corner of Sturdevant’s Pond

- Connections from the Harvest Lane open space through to Grange Park to the west and south perhaps to Sanborn Lane
- Expansion of the State Forest by adding land on the north side of South Brook to the north and to Walnut Street to the east along
- A possible South Brook-side trail from the potentially expanded State Forest to Town streamside land to the north.
- Possible expansion of the Titicut Conservation Area by adding adjacent town water land (WD-6) and the multi resourced farm land across the River in Middleboro.

B. Protected Public and Non-profit Parcels

1. Land Managed by Conservation Commission

C-1 Stiles and Hart Conservation Area

Former clay pits along the Town River

Location: At the north-central edge of town on the Town River, east of Route 18, south of High Street, across from the Town River Landing boat launching area. The land is the site of the former Plymouth County Agricultural Society's fairgrounds.

Area: 69 acres on Assessors map

Map/Parcels: 12/44

Zoning: Res. D.

Access: Signed entrance via gated sewer easement off of Rte. 18 just south of Brick Kiln Lane. There is also a short bit of un-marked frontage on High Street

Handicapped Accessibility: Poor; via the level but uneven sewer easement described above. It could be passable by a wheel chair with assistance. No provision for the vision impaired.

Facilities: Generally wooded area with a driveway along Town River to a point across from town's Sewage Treatment Plant, vestigial clay pit ponds, and at least one enclosed small concrete structure; areas with a shallow bank allow boat launching or landing.

Uses: Hiking, wildlife habitat, canoeing, kayaking, fishing. The management plan recommends limiting uses until the foot bridge from the Town River Landing giving greater access is built.

Management/ Maintenance: Acquired with Self Help Funds; Under Conservation Commission jurisdiction/ Care by the volunteer Parklands Stewards

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as Conservation land

Recommendations:

- Move gate about 100 feet in to allow some off-street parking on site
- Build the proposed footbridge from the site to the Town River Landing to allow foot access from behind the old Highway Barn.
- Make pathways to the site's destinations passable by a wheelchair

C-2 Tuckerwood Conservation Area

Location: On south side of High Street, east of Hayward Street, west of the Bridge Street intersection with High Street.

Area: 32 acres

Map/Parcels: 14/21 (Shown as 33 acres, 13,068 sq. ft.)

Zoning: R-C

Access: Signed driveway on High Street with an informal dirt parking area. Signage is hard to see when driving by since it is parallel to the road. There is no apparent signage on the river identifying the property as public

Handicapped Accessibility: Poor: Sloping roadway to the parking areas would be difficult for an unassisted wheel chair and the path into the site is often narrow and bumpy, being passable only by a pedestrian. Path to the shore ends at a 2-foot drop to the water. No provision for the vision impaired.

Terrain/Facilities: Pine and oak woods with a trail across a power line and a generally easy path down to the Town River, view across marsh and a potential oxbow.

Uses: Hiking, wildlife habitat, fishing, canoeing, kayaking

Management/ Maintenance: Acquired with Self Help funds, so managed by Conservation Commission with care by the volunteer Parklands Stewards

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as Conservation land)



Entrance to Tuckerwood Conservation Area - Sloping Driveway leading to gravel parking lot and rough paths through woods to river. Signs are difficult to see when driving by.

Recommendations:

- Examine possible hiking access via power line from Hayward Street .
- Develop a potential easy canoe/kayak landing area where bank is low if compatible with bank stability.

- Explore the potential for tenting
- Improve paths from parking area to the river's edge to accommodate a wheelchair
- Add discrete signs on the River identifying the edges of the property

C-3 Wyman Meadow

Location: South of Plymouth Street on the Taunton River

Area: 55 acres. There are 35 acres of recently purchased conservation land combined with 20 acres of water supply land.

Map/Parcels: 39/3(35+acres); 39/4 (20.2 acres).

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: By a long, unsigned, paved driveway to a Water Department pumping station with informal gravel parking for 2-3 cars. There is no apparent signage on the river identifying the property as public

Handicapped Accessibility: Poor; After the driveway to the Water Department facilities there are unimproved paths over hilly grassland and through thin woods to the River, passable only on foot.

Facilities, Terrain: Rolling pasture land with woods and brush at edge of slow moving river segment. Site has a partially vandalized information kiosk and bench. Site abuts the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts heavily wooded, unsigned North Fork Preserve to the east - described later. Paved access drive to the wellfield bisects the meadow rather than running along the western edge as originally proposed, thereby lessening its landscape value.

Uses: Water supply protection, hiking, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, scenic view across fields to river, cross-country skiing, prohibited ATV access to adjacent sand pits.

Management/Maintenance: The main part acquired with Self Help funds is managed by the Conservation Commission, the Water Dept. land is managed by the Department; the Parklands Stewards maintain both.

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as conservation land; moderate (temporary) as water and that could go to another use.

Recommendations:

- Repair information display
- Designate and sign an allowable parking area next to pumping station
- Improve access to river and add a small canoe/kayak landing area
- Add discrete signs on the River identifying the edges of the property
- Encourage/ assist tree planting behind Form A houses along Plymouth Street to eventually restore some of the original landscape character.
- Put all land under Conservation Commission for full protection
- Improve paths from parking area over hill to the river's edge to accommodate a wheelchair
- Explore joint management of this site and the adjacent Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts' North Fork Preserve
- Explore relocation of the access road to the western edge of the property



Unsigned access to Wyman Meadow with Water Department structures in background and hillside sloping down to the river beyond them.



Wyman Meadow Viewed from Southwest near the Taunton River; Wildlands Trust of SE Mass land to right, road to town wells to left

C-4 Titicut Conservation Parkland

Location: On Taunton River at southern edge of town

Area - 27.8 acres., with seven acres located in the adjacent town of Raynham

Map/Parcels 131/8,9,10,11

Zoning R-A/B

Access: Well signed Driveway in from Beach Street There is no apparent signage on the river identifying the property as public.

Handicapped Accessibility: Poor; irregular dirt path/driveway in from Beech Street parking area to camp sites and a very steep climb from pull-out area

Facilities: Campground, slope for pulling out canoes/kayaks/tubes... , campfire area

Uses: Hiking, Canoe tenting by groups with Conservation Commission permit, e.g., by Taunton River Watershed Alliance's "Source to the Sea" trips.

Management: Acquired with Self Help funds; managed by Conservation Commission in care of Parkland Stewards

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as Conservation land

Recommendations:

- Expand site by incorporating adjacent Water Dept. land (Map/Parcel 131/7, 20.22 acres) if unneeded for long-term water supply.
- Study the inclusion/integration of portions of the multi-resourced Taylor Farm property across the river in cooperation with Middleboro, the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts and others, possibly with access from one two footbridges.
- Survey site to ensure that trails are all on public land
- Work with neighbors to ensure appropriate access/egress from western edge of park land
- Add discrete signs on the River identifying the edges of the property
- Make paths from parking area to campsites passable for wheelchairs.
- Seek a more level pull-out area or add a rope or hand holds to ease climb from landing area
- Work with Raynham to integrate use and management of total site



Titicut Conservation Parkland - Exploring gully reportedly excavated to build/launch small frigates

2. Protected Land Managed by other Town Departments

C-5 Iron Works Park (aka Stanley Ironworks)

Location: On both sides of Town River southeast of High Street next to new Highway Barn near West Bridgewater line

Area: 16 acres

Map/Parcels: 10/40, 16.0 Acres; (Plus lot 11/3, 3.7 acres- possible DPW land). Zoning: I-B, R-D, R-D C

Access: Signed entrance off High Street and through Highway Department property, informal parking at edge of site.

Handicapped Accessibility: Poor: Level vehicle access from road, irregular surface to the bridge over the River may be passable by a wheelchair with assistance.

Facilities: Deteriorated privately-owned dams and a fish ladder near new Highway Barn and shell of an historic 19th Century brick and stone industrial structure, new bridge over river giving good access to either side

Uses: Scenic site for exploring riverside and the limited industrial ruins, portage point for canoeing, fishing. A gift to Town.

Management: Conservation Commission, Highway Department and volunteer Park Stewards **Maintenance:** Highway Department and volunteer Park Stewards. Bridge is in good condition, main privately-owned dam is deteriorated.

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) if under the Conservation Commission; moderate (temporary) if under the Highway Dept.

Recommendations:

- Consider acquisition / repair of dam with Community Preservation Act funds and Division of Marine Fisheries assistance.
- Expand information panels to show layout of successive Iron works.
- Add an easier canoe/kayak take-out /put-in place
- Improve the paths through the site's attractions and to the canoe launching area if needed.



Lower end of Stanley Mill dam impoundment (Town River Pond) just above stone culverts under High Street across from the Bridgewater Highway Barn

C-5 Carver's Pond

Location: Between Rte.18 and north of Winter Street / Conant Street

Area : 70.1 according to Assessors Maps (Audubon Management Plan says 107 acres.)

Map/Parcels: 63/2;63/18; 63/19; 63/20; 63/21; 49/44; 49/27; 62/28

Zoning: Residential C

Access: Off Summer Street plus frontage on Bedford Street

Handicapped Accessibility: Poor: Trails from parking area are irregular, possibly accommodating an assisted wheelchair, but basically for pedestrians

Facilities: trails, dam

Uses: Water supply protection, hiking, fishing

Management: The 1995 Open Space Plan says that some "land on the east side of Carver's Pond (has) also been deemed protected conservation parcels under town control ... not due to any deeded restriction but...to their remote location or long standing purpose. Elsewhere the Parklands Management Plan for this site says that "The Water and Sewer Commission administer the southern end of the Pond while the Conservation Commission administers the northern portion as an integral part of the developing town-wide open space system."



The deteriorated Stanley Mill Dam from upstream



The northern half of the Stanly Mill Dam viewed from below

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as conservation land /moderate (temporary) as water supply protection land which could be sold. Under the care of the volunteer Parkland Stewards.

Recommendations:

- Determine specifics of Conservation Commission and Water Department ownership / jurisdiction

- Examine the range of allowable contact uses compatible with drinking water quality concerns
- Consider supplying or allowing canoe/ kayak rentals
- Repair dam control structure if needed
- Acquire all or parts of selected private parcels; to compete public control of shoreline
- Seek careful, protective trail/boardwalk design to allow circumnavigation of Pond by the able-bodied and the handicapped without threatening water resources.
- Improve capacity for swimming lessons with a protective U-shaped float system, if allowable



North end of Carver's Pond with dam in distance

C-6 (R-3 as Rec. site) Crescent Street Fields (former Hogg's Farm)

Location: West side of Crescent Street south of Route 104

Area: 49.9 acres

Map/parcel 47/115

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Crescent St off of Pleasant Street and behind the new Police Station

Handicapped Access: Fair; field and wetlands are reached over level land from adjacent streets but no wheelchair-accessible trails as of yet. Future recreation facilities would be required to be accessible

Facilities: Fields, woods, wetlands and stream flowing to Carver's Pond, future planned recreation facilities. Land abuts woodlands proposed for the Starr Park/Playground.

Use: Now limited to informal open space use. Much future use is expected since growing interest has increased the number of girls softball teams. Legion Field can no longer accommodate these and Little League teams, so the Crescent Street fields are expected to provide three needed softball fields. Also much potential for community gardens on open land beyond sports fields

Management/ Maintenance: By Recreation Commission; with wetlands open space overseen by Conservation Commission, and possibly by expanded Parklands Stewards. Plans include on-site shed/garage for maintenance equipment.

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as Recreation land

Recommendations:

- Complete ballfield project
- If feasible, build a field house so that the Recreation Commission has a place to run programs, and the town has indoor recreation space.
- Define Conservation area, and add trails and an interpretive material under Commission direction.
- Develop trails through site and through Starr Park woodlands to Starr Road.
- Monitor use to identify future needs
- Examine possible expansion through Ch. 61A lands to south and on to Oak Ridge Lane neighborhood
- Protect land in underlying Aquifer Protection District.
- Explore possible use of some land for community gardens

C-7 Lake Nippenicket Town Holdings

Location: On western edge of town with three parcels on southeastern corner of lake, (only one with lake frontage); two small house lots on the eastern side with frontage, and three 1-2 acre lots without frontage

Area: 13.6 acres with lake frontage or adjacent to parcels with lake frontage; 4.1- acre house lot off Bridle Road without frontage

Maps/Parcels: 82/5,7, 83/60,78,79,80;70/34

The following describes the lake overall, not just the town holdings.

Access: Via Park and Ride lot/Boat Ramp lot off of Route 106

Handicapped Access: Level parking lot, steep slope down boat ramp; gradual unfinished slope to closed beach which is partly blocked with stones. There is no dock allowing easier access to boats.

Facilities: Park and Ride lot, state boat ramp, sign notes the “permanently closed” beach due to a drowning

Use: Hiking around lake, boating and jet skiing,

Management: Town land is reportedly managed by the Conservation Commission but the Assessors list it as unprotected general town land so it is described both here and under miscellaneous town land (T-14). The state land is managed by the Department of Fish and Game or its Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the non-profit land described below is managed by its owners.

Maintenance: Town land by Conservation Commission, State land and facilities by State; nonprofit land described below by owners.

Degree of Protection: High (In perpetuity as State, Town and non-profit wildlife, recreation and conservation land with State land (described below) largely surrounding the lake.

Note: The much greater state holdings totaling 237 acres include most of the west side of the lake, a group of small lots on the northeast corner of the lake, and some backland along the edge of Rte. 24 in addition to scattered Hockomock Swamp parcels northeast of the lake, as discussed under state holdings and shown on the map of Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest

In addition, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts report holding a total of 102 acres; 88 on the eastern shore held jointly, and 14 acres on an island held by the Trust (as described under non-profit holdings) while TNC holds a conservation restriction on the 88 acres..

Recommendations:

- Work with State Public Access Board to improve state boat ramp, particularly its handicapped accessibility
- Transfer town land with lake frontage to the Conservation Commission
- Have Total Maximum Daily Loads developed if needed for water quality and public health
- Explore coordination of Lake management and uses with the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts, The Nature Conservancy and the State
- Clarify site availability and explore and support Recreation Commission ideas about developing a boating/sailing program with a boat house, rescue boat and related off-site swimming lessons, consistent with wildlife protection.

- Continue acquisition of undeveloped or minimally developed shoreline and when possible
- Consider land trades to give the town and State contiguous properties to manage if that is an issue

C-8 Sturtevant's Pond

Location: West of the end of South Street, north of Green Street

Area: Pond is estimated at 8.9 acres

Map/Parcel 132/2 (3-14520)

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Frontage on South Street

Handicapped Access: Fair; level land at South Street allows movement along a low retaining wall allowing access to edge of pond, but no easy contact.

Facilities: None developed. Pond is an impoundment of Snow's Brook which flows south through two control structures to the Taunton River. Presumably frozen in winter, except near control structures,

Uses: Possible informal local use for ice skating and fishing

Management: Town, overseen by Conservation Commission.

Maintenance: Town, Conservation Commission. Unknown needs; the two control structures appear sound.

Recommendations:

- Clarify and improve access
- Expand holdings or easements to north along Snow's Brook to town's Emerald Lane holdings
- Improve access into water for canoes /kayaks
- Possibly add a float if swimming is appropriate



Standing on the wall at the eastern end of Sturtevant's Pond, January 6, 2008

C-9 Cobblestone Lane Subdivision off of Vernon Street

Location: Off Vernon Street wrapping around this Open Space Community subdivision.

Area: Approx 21.5 acres

Map/Parcel: 98/3

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: On either side of Cobblestone Lane, then around the end of the Lane itself to rear land.

Handicapped Access: Poor; front of site is level grassland along the edge of the road but the rest is woodland with no apparent passable trails to the rear portion.

Facilities: Woods and fields abutting a power line connecting to other public lands. The layout gives good direct access to the common land for all but four of the lots and those abut town land north of the Golf Course. A powerline runs through the property.

Use: Presumably passive use by neighbors and possible hiking along the power line to the golf course or other destinations.

Management: Town, Conservation Commission

Maintenance: Town, Conservation Commission. Apparent minimal management of donated cluster land.

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) if under the Conservation Commission or under a Conservation Restriction.

Recommendations:

- Examine feasibility of trails via the power line through the adjacent Dundee Drive land and on to the Ch.61A land to the north, and south through the golf course and related town Chaffee land.
- Clarify ownership and management responsibilities and the residents response to the project and its open space.



Open space bracketing drive into Cobblestone Lane cluster subdivision

C-10 Toole Park “The Toole Legacy ”

Location: North of Pleasant Street near Elm Street, between the Driftwood Dr. subdivision and electric transmission facilities.

Area: 9.2 acres.

Map/Parcel: 72/1

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Off of Pleasant Street

Handicapped Access: Poor; Site is at edge of the highway with a small parking area but the rest is very dense, low wet woodlands with no easy accessibility.

Facilities: Woods, brush and a stream, with a parking area cleared by the Highway Department. Except for parking area site has not yet been developed in accord with gift agreement

Use: Land was donated to the town with a reported \$100,000 endowment, but there is only minimal informal use so far.

Management: By Town (Presumably ultimately by Conservation or Recreation)

Maintenance: By Town, with none now needed

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as Conservation or Recreation land, and in accord with assumed protective conditions on the gift.

Recommendations:

- Work with neighbors to determine best use and complete project
- Examine potential connections through the Ch. 61A land across Pleasant Street and on through the Dundee Drive land (T-5) and the Cobblestone lands (C-10), and potentially through the town holding T-21 and on to the Golf Course.

C-11 Auburn Street Cemetery,

Location: South side of Auburn Street, east of Summer Street (Listed as 0 Curve Street by Assessors.)

Map/Parcel: 77 / 17

Area: 33,000 square feet

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Off Auburn Street

Handicapped Access: Moderate; passable level paths through site

Facilities: A small cemetery, part of the local historic landscape

Uses: As a local cemetery and small open space

Management: By Town (Presumably ultimately Highway /Forestry Department)

Maintenance: By Town, as above

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as alternative uses are unlikely

Recommendations:

- Continue as is
- Examine any handicapped access issues

Note: In addition to the above, the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB) reports that the Conservation Commission was granted “a right of way to the Matfield/Town junction at Three Rivers Farm in the late 1980s or early 90s. This needs to be mapped when more information is available.

3. Protected Lands Managed by the Commonwealth**Co-1 Lake Nippenicket**

Location: At western edge of town, headwaters of Town River.

Area: 252.8 acres including 178.48 acres on Lake or abutting Lakefront property, 16.17 acres on the east side accommodating the parking lot and boat ramp, and 58.14 acres of backland along Rte. 24.

Map/Parcels: 56/1,2; 69/2; 82/8,62,65,70; 71/27,29; 83/2,27,28,40,83 plus 114 very small lots on north shore of the Lake on maps 56 and 57. The large 20-30 acre parcel surrounding these small lots is mapped as permanently protected land (presumably state-owned) land on the Mass GIS maps and therefore it is shown as such this plan's map of Land of Conservation and Recreation Interest, Fig..V-1. However the ownership could not be confirmed since the Assessors maps show no parcel number for this parcel.

In addition there are 415.6 acres of State Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Hockomock Swamp land northeast of the Lake and along the West Bridgewater line east of Rte. 24 in area Co-2 as discussed below.

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Roadway off of Rte. 104 to park and ride lot and from Overlook Drive and Chace Dr.

to extensive state land on the west side of the Lake. Little direct access to extensive state land on the northeast shore of the Lake except from the WTSEM/TNC land at the end of Lakeside Drive.

Access to land along the edge of Rte. 24 from Bridle Road east of Lakeside Drive

Handicapped Access: Poor to State and Town holdings on the west shore given no apparent trails from street to shore. Fair to beach and boat ramp from park and ride lot. As noted above, depending on the water level, a person could be wheeled through light woods and brush to beach or (in a non-motorized chair) go directly into the water via the boat ramp if swimming is restored.

Facilities: Park and Ride Lot, Boat ramp, and a beach “permanently closed” by the state due to a drowning

Use: Boating and jet skiing. Closed to swimming since a drowning.

Management: State for land largely covering the western edge of the lake and for the northeastern corner which is part of the Hockomock Wildlife Management Area.

Maintenance: State Division of Fish and Wildlife

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as State wildlife land

Recommendations:

- Clarify site availability and proceed with boating facilities and programs consistent with wildlife protection
- Develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (of pollutants) (TMDLs) for the Lake, if needed.
- Continue acquisition of undeveloped or minimally developed shore land when possible
- Consider land trades to give town and state contiguous properties to manage, if it is an issue.
- Work with Town, WTSEM and TNC on coordinated management and use of the Lake.
- Clarify the ownership of the land surrounding the many small lots on Assessors Maps 56 and 57



Lake Nippenicket, minimal beach (left) seen from boat ramp (right) in December. Below, much reduced beach and boating activity during high water in late April (Highest water was 1+ feet above this.)



Co-2 Hockomock Swamp Lands

Location: North and northeast of Lake Nippenicket, east and west of Rte. 24 along the West Bridgewater line almost to North Street and abutting a 263.2 acre Ch. 61B holding to the south

Maps 17, 18, 29,31,44, 58 and 59, various small parcels

Area: 415.6 acres according to the Executive Office for Administration and Finance's "Report on Real Property Owned and Leased by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."

Access: Limited from local streets (Harvard Street, Brown Avenue, and Colby Road. west of North Street), from an easement off of Harvest Lane, and from Maple Street in West Bridgewater. Two parcels, 44/5 (35.5 acres) and 58/32 (20 acres) west of Elm Street abut the major 263.3- acre Ch.61B holding, but have no frontage on Elm Street

Handicapped Access: Very limited; given low, wet, nearly impassable terrain and no developed trails.

Facilities: Wooded swamp held for wildlife habitat and stormwater storage

Uses: Hiking, hunting, nature study.

Management: State Division of Fisheries and Wildlife as the Hockomock Wildlife Management Area.

Maintenance: Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as state wildlife land.

Recommendations:

- Continue acquisitions, filling gaps in holdings.
- Improve connections to adjacent extensive Ch. 61B holdings and protect both from impacts of nearby industry

Co-3 Bridgewater State Forest

Location: West of Water Street bordering a segment of South Brook.(Note: some sources report other state park land west of Summer Street and south of Summerdale Farm Way, but it is not shown on the Assessors' map nor listed by the Dept. of Administration and Finance.)

Maps/parcels 50/85

Area: 58.5 acres

Access: Unsigned site fronts on Water Street and possibly has access from lots on Dantonio, Laurel and Kathleen Drives.

Handicapped Access: Poor; site is along Water Street but without any apparent paths into the interior.

Facilities: Woodlands held for wildlife habitat and passive use, bordering South Brook to the west

Uses: Local Hiking, nature observation; little use as site is unsigned.

Management: By Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

Maintenance: By DCR, probably minimal maintenance.

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) as state open space land.

Recommendations:

- Consider acquisition of adjacent wooded streamside parcels to north and east, and north and west Street. These will enlarge the Forest, give it more depth and include both sides of about 2200 feet of South Brook downstream from Skeeter Mill Pond.
- Later, consider further acquisitions to north and east and possible frontage on Walnut Street making the Forest more of an asset and allowing movement from Water Street to Walnut Street as part of an east-west trail system.
- If Commonwealth is disinterested in expansion, consider seeking a transfer to the town's Conservation Commission
- Seek a signed entrance to the State Forest across from Skeeter Mill Pond to encourage through movement.
- Study a possible streamside trail from expanded Forest north to town land at Hayward and Whitman Streets

Co-4 Old State Farm / Bridgewater Correctional Complex

Location: Many un-numbered parcels between Flagg Street to the north and the Taunton River to the south, and between Bedford Street to the west and the Cumberland Farm land to the east.

Maps: 76,77,89,90,91,102,103,104,112,113,114,120,121,122,127,128,129,133 and 134.

Area: A total of 1,485.72 acres according to the Executive Office for Administration and Finance's "Report on Real Property Owned and Leased by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."

Access: By State Farm Road and Flagg Street off Bedford Street, by Titicut Street from the South, by Conant Street running north and south through the facility (though controlled by a gate north of the complex), and by Summer Street running north and south through the former farm land east of the railroad tracks. In addition, approximately 40 acres just west of

Conant Street and the northernmost part of the BCC land, and north and south of Flag Street are shown by MassGIS as permanently protected state land though there is no parcel number or stated area. Accordingly Fig. V-1 shows it as a permanently protected part of the BCC holdings.

Handicapped Access: Fair; much of the area is on roads allowing access through the site, but there is little provision for crossing the fields

Facilities: Hospital and prison buildings occupying about 223 acres at the approximate center of the site. Surrounding these are about 342 acres in open farm fields, (excluding the North Hay Fields used by the Bridgewater Youth Soccer program and the adjacent Rainbow's End Playground); and approximately 922 acres of woodlands surrounding the fields and running along about 6700 feet of the Taunton River.

Uses: Habitat for grasslands birds, scenic enjoyment from Summer, Conant, and Titicut Streets, buffer between BCC and surrounding neighborhoods, and some recently restored private farming under five year leases .

Management/Maintenance: Minimal maintenance of land by Department of Corrections.

Degree of Protection: High for 425 acres of Old State Farm land covered by Article 97 following a legislative vote sought by the Natural Resources Trust of Greater Bridgewater. (This may be intended to be in perpetuity, but the Legislature could allow a change of use or sale by a 2/3rds vote.) This reportedly covers the riverfront land south of the powerline and east of the railroad tracks, and some scattered parcels, but nothing north of the Ice Pond. But, since the state land west of Conant Street discussed above is mapped as permanently protected by MassGIS , Fig-V-1 also shows it that way. The rest of the BCC holdings are mapped as unprotected since the BCC could be closed and the land sold, however unlikely. For the purposes of this plan it can be thought of as having moderate or "limited" protection like other public lands whose purposes could change.

Recommendations:

- Seek open space or further agricultural use of the former farm fields, possibly preserving some as rarely-mowed grasslands habitat for birds such as the endangered Upland Sandpiper.
- Time any mowing around the nesting seasons.
- Seek state commitment to permanent use of the North Hay fields by the Youth Soccer Program and town's Rainbow's End Playground, if needed..
- Include a reasonable depth along the 6700 feet of river frontage in the Linked Conservation Parklands system, hopefully in conjunction with the intervening river frontage under Ch 61A.
- Resolve the ownership and purposes of the state land west of Conant Street and north and south of Flag Street , reportedly part of the 425 acres protected under Article 97.

Co-5 Skeeter Mill Pond ("Flynn's Pond")

Location: Around parts of Skeeter Mill Pond, west of Water Street north of Laurel Street

Area: 34.37 acres

Map/Parcel: 50/10; 49/8,10

Zoning: R-D

Access: From gated entrance off Water Street and frontage on Laurel Street

Handicapped Access: Very limited; no developed, passable paths into site. One must go around the gate.

Uses: Habitat, nature study, flood storage, fishing

Management/maintenance: State Division of Capital Asset Management

Degree of Protection: Moderate (“temporary” as general state land that could be sold or developed)

Recommendations:

- Determine purposes of state acquisition
- Transfer to the Department of Fish and Game or the Department of Recreation and Conservation for habitat/open space use
- Set access/use policies, keep gate normally open
- Examine potential trail to top of Great Hill via adjacent state (BSC) parcel 49/124.
- Coordinate management with the welcoming private Flynn property around rest of Skeeter Mill Pond (50/11,12,84)
- Seek a signed entrance to the State Forest across from Skeeter Mill Pond to encourage through movement.

4. Non-Profit Trust Protected Land

Land Trusts

NPT-1 Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts - North Fork Preserve

Location: Between Plymouth Street /East Street and the Taunton River, east of Wyman Meadow and near Halifax town line

Map: 39/7

Acres: 41.2 /

Access: From unsigned right-of-way at intersection of Plymouth and East Sts., or from its long border with the town’s Wyman Meadow. There is no apparent signage on the river identifying the property as a non-profit holding for public use.

Handicapped Access: Very Poor; a steep partially-wooded slope /drainage swale entering site from road, but passable only by pedestrians.

Facilities: woodlands and riverbank

Uses: Adjacent to Wyman’s Meadow with potential joint uses.



Un-marked access; swale entering North Fork Preserve from corner of Plymouth and East Streets.

Management: WTSEM

Maintenance: By owner, minimal management

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) depending on any restrictions

Recommendations:

- Discuss integrated management with Wyman Meadow with for easier access and benefits of joint land management with Town
- Add identification signs on Plymouth Street or East Street.
- Improve pedestrian access into site
- Add discrete riverside identification signs at the edges of the property

NPT-2 Wildlands Trust of SE Mass. Conservation Restriction (CR)

Location: From South Street to Taunton River between Bridgewater Avenue and Dickens Street.

Map: 118/ 4

Acres:12.7

Access: From South Street but land is not open to the public

Handicapped access: Would be limited through private yard, but no public access is allowed

Facilities: Woodlands and riverbank, former pick your own blueberry farm

Use: No allowed uses; just land preservation under CR to WTSEM.

Management/Maintenance: By private owner; Non-profit has conservation restriction but no management is needed.

Degree of Protection: High (in Perpetuity) given the conservation restriction.

Recommendations:

- Monitor any changing owner's preference.

NPT-3 Wildlands Trust /The Nature Conservancy Lake Nippenicket Holdings

Location: East side of Lake Nippenicket, north of Lakeside Drive Map 39/7

Map/Parcels 57/ 75, 76, 77-83; 70/2 plus 69/12 island owned by WTSEM alone

Acres: Approximately 90.9 on mainland (minus about 12 acres near shore held by former owner for development,) and 14 on island held by WTSEM alone according to the WTSEM. (Assessors sheets total 93.13 acres minus the withheld land for 81.1 acres.)

Access: From end of Lakeside Drive.

Facilities Mixed woodland and about 2900 feet of shoreline plus the island. The land has marsh, woodlands, and a thin, low, wet, brushy, but ill-defined strip between shore and the area left for private development

Use: Hiking, nature study, but varied potential with use of the western shoreline potentially affected by the configuration of any development.

Management: Non-profit owners, minimal management

Maintenance: Unknown

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) for mainland since TNC holds a conservation restriction (CR), and high on the island given the WTSEM's conservation purposes.

Recommendations:

- Clarify configuration of probable development on the retained developable land
- Investigate opportunities for cooperative management of holdings by the Town, State and non-profit land owners and prospective developers of the retained developable land
- Work to keep allowed development far enough from shore to allow public use.

Non-Profit Managed Open Space in Clusters

NPC-1 Homenook Subdivison of South Street

Location: Harvest Lane Off of South Street.

Map/Parcels: 87/39

Area: 45.4 acres (if whole parcel is included.)

Access: Unsigned; limited from easement off Harvest Lane

Handicapped access: Limited; land is level at an apparent easement and possibly passable by an assisted wheel chair, but there are no evident paved trails or paths.

Facilities: None known, except a remaining central sand pit

Use: Presumably passive natural recreation, but unknown

Management/Maintenance Reported to formerly be by the “Homenook Owner’s Trust” (Developer) but now possibly under a homeowners assn.

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) based on a reported conservation restriction

Recommendations:

- Clarify land involved and its management
- Seek pedestrian access to surrounding streets to allow through movement
- Reconcile uses with sand pit in center of site

NPC- 2 Pheasant Lane

Location: Off Hayward Street

Map/Parcel: 23/117

Area: 19.6 acres according to Assessors Maps, 21.7 acres according to CR summary below

Access: From mapped easements off of Whitman Street and Pheasant Lane; these are mapped but not apparent on ground.

Handicapped Access: Very limited as is marshland behind private houses

Facilities: Marsh and woods and a Town River Oxbow.

Use: Habitat and nature observation; possibly fishing/canoeing

Management/Maintenance: Unknown, presumably by homeowners

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) based on reported conservation restrictions

Recommendations:

- Improve visibility of access points
- Add boardwalks if needed to get through marsh

C. Partially Protected Lands Held for other Purposes

1. Land Managed by the Highway and Forestry Department

HD-1 East Street Sand Pit .

Location: Between East Street and River at Halifax town line.

Map: 54/7

Acres: 18

Access: From right-of-way across from Tony Terrace

Handicapped Access: Poor; road in is rough and much of the ground is wet or soft. A wheel chair would need a smooth or paved path around the sand pit

Facilities: Highway Department sandpit, woods and wooded riverbank

Use: Used by Highway Department for sand in past, informal open space use by ATV riders

Management / Maintenance: By Highway Dept.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) as town-owned, but not under C.C. or Rec. Comm. restrictions

Recommendations:

- Investigate ways to incorporate this with other town and non-profit holdings in planned Town River/ Taunton River Greenway.

- Work with Highway Department to get parking and access to riverside including possible canoe landing compatible with any continued sand pit operation.

2. Land Managed by the Water Department

WD-1 Carver Pond Lands

The properties in the southern half of the Carver Pond managed by the Water Department are discussed under item C-5 above.

WD-2 Wyman Meadow Wellfield

The combined Conservation and Water Department lands here are discussed under item C-3

WD-3 Matfield River Lands

Location: Four lots around the crossing of High Street and Matfield River..

Map/Parcel 14/11,12,17,18

Area: 34.0 acres according to Assessors Maps

Access: From High Street with paving, driveways or a cart paths into all but the northeast parcel **Handicapped Access:**

- Northwest quadrant is level and paved but offers access only to old pumping station and support facilities with unimproved access to the river's bank
- The North East Quadrant has an unimproved path into the site approaching the river's edge. A person in a wheelchair would need assistance.
- The Southeast quadrant has a paved driveway to the fenced-off pumping stations and treatment facilities and then there are irregular rough paths with much brush between the driveway and the river making the river's edge inaccessible to chairs and most walkers.
- The southwest quadrant has sloping path possibly passable by an assisted wheel chair. The edge of the river is approachable only on foot.

Facilities: Old 1913 pumping station on the NW parcel, new pumping stations on SE parcel, wooded streamside land on SW and NE parcels

Use: Provision and protection of water supplies, a very scenic area

Management /Maintenance: By Water Department, though not so listed in exempt list.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) as could be sold if no longer needed for water supply.

Recommendations:

- Improve access to the scenic northeast parcel
- Apply conservation restrictions to land, especially NW parcel, or transfer all to Conservation Commission

WD-4 Sprague Hill Water tank

Location: Sprague Hill, close to E. Bridgewater and town parcel 4/1.

Map/Parcel: 4/5

Area: 7.4 acres

Access: Via steep driveway from Bedford Street

Handicapped Access: Poor; driveway is paved but very steep and path around the fenced in tank is very narrow and partly overgrown.

Facilities: Water tank with view potential if the area to the west were cleared, but downslope trees still limit the view.

Use: Town water tank

Management/Maintenance: Water Dept.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) as may not always be needed.

Recommendations:

- Examine prospects of acquiring adjacent land to north and east up to wooded town parcel (4/1) on the E. Bridgewater line possibly in cooperation with East Bridgewater.
- Examine possibilities of improving access to path around fenced-in tank

WD-5 Great Hill Water Tank

Location Top of Great Hill on BSC Campus .

Map/Parcels: 35/31,32,33,

Area:10.67 acres

Access: Great Hill Drive Driveway

Handicapped access: Poor; driveway is paved but steep and access around the fenced in tank is difficult.

Facilities: Water tank and support equipment



The Taunton River

Photo by Laura Campbell

Use: Water supply and informal viewpoint, but view is largely blocked by the tank

Management/ Maintenance: By water Dept.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) if not always needed

Recommendations: Examine possible use of site as a view point

WD-6 Water Department Titicut land

Map/Parcel: 131/7

Area: 20.2 acres

Access: From Titicut Conservation Area and by a right-of-way from Vernon Street

Handicapped access: Fair; level paths from entrance road into Titicut Conservation Area.

Facilities: Woods and fields next to Titicut Reservation campground with 1460' of river frontage.

Use: Acquired for a potential well, but it was not productive; Department does not expect to use it.

Management/Maintenance Water Department .

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) if not needed for water supply

Recommendations:

- Explore integration with adjacent Titicut Conservation Area
- Examine possible access from frontage on Vernon Street
- Consider tree planting to screen houses along Vernon Street

3. Land Managed by the Selectmen**BS-1 McEwain School**

Location: Off Rte. 28

Area: 1.4 acres

Map/Parcels: 20/40

Zoning R-D

Facilities: Former school used for Building Dept. offices; former school play area with sand box, buried truck tires, pavement painted for schoolyard games, and a basketball hoop,

Handicapped Access: Good, level ground accessible from sidewalk

Uses: Former BR School turned over to town for offices. Reuse now being studied by town.

Management/ Maintenance: Town, poor outdoor facilities

Degree of Protection- Low (temporary as could be sold)

Recommendations:

- Review results of present Town land study
- Consider upgrading play area for use as a walkable neighborhood tot lot

4. Land Managed by the School District

The school lands land used for recreation and informal open space, and managed by the Bridgewater-Raynham School District are listed below under items RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RS-4, and RS-5.

5. State Lands**SL-1 Bridgewater State College (BSC)**

Location: East of downtown, south of Plymouth Street, on both sides of RR track to Great Hill Road.

Area: 211.1 acres according to State Real Property Report

Map/Parcel: Maps 22,34,35,and 50. There are too many parcels to list. In addition to the many contiguous parcels, two undeveloped parcels; 35/23 (2.1 acres) and 49/94 (5.2 acres) are along the rail right-of-way south of the campus. These are shown on the Fig.CV-1 as land with limited protection.

Zoning: R-D

Access: Via Plymouth Street, Grove Street, Great Hill Road and other local streets

Facilities: College campus with buildings, rail station and recreational facilities as discussed in recreation section, and some un-built woodlands

Use: Continued growth in students and facilities..

Management/Maintenance: BSC.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) as facility needs change

Recommendations:

- Continue joint use of selected recreation facilities
- Coordinate campus planning with town planning, especially regarding circulation, housing and buffering to minimize community impacts.

D. Minimally Protected Town Holdings

Miscellaneous Town Lands (Partial)

These are generally lands that may have gone through tax title but now belong to the town if only by default according to the Assessors, or were turned over to the town by another body. Most were accepted at the 1998 Town Meeting. Some, like those at Lake Nippenicket, are referred to as Conservation-managed open space holdings, but are listed by the Assessors as unprotected town property.

T-1 Broad Street

Location: East of Broad Street at East Bridgewater Line

Map/parcel: 4/1

Area 2.67 Acres

Access: Frontage on Broad Street

Handicapped Access: None; land drops steeply and is blocked by highway guard rail

Facilities: wooded wetlands

Zoning: R-D

Use: Habitat; No use observed

Management/ Maintenance: By Selectmen by default; no Maintenance needed.

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) as could be sold

Recommendations:

- Transfer to the Conservation Commission.
- Consider consolidation with adjacent private woodland and Sprague Hill water tank site.(WD-4)

T-2 Aldrich Road

Location: West of Aldrich Road near West Bridgewater line

Map/Parcel: 9/27

Area: 5.3 Acres

Zoning: R -A/B

Access: By path off of Aldrich Road

Handicapped Access: Fair, paths in from street are rough, but probably passable by an assisted wheel chair.

Facilities: local trails through site

Use: Wooded backdrop to neighborhood, in informal local use.

Management/Maintenance: Selectmen by default

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) if held by the Selectmen, as it could be sold

Recommendations:

- Transfer to Conservation Commission
- Examine prospects of flagged rear land.
- Examine potential for connection to and through private land to the west to get a continuous wildlife corridor to the State's Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area

T-3 Plymouth Street

Location: South of Plymouth Street, just east of Jillian's Way

Map/parcel: 25/81

Area 2.6 Acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Plymouth Street

Handicapped Access: Poor, very steep slope and wetlands; any future path would have to zig-zag greatly.

Facilities: Steep slope to an ox bow and the River.

Use: None known, except for possible informal nature study and access to River.

Management / Maintenance: Selectmen by default.

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary); if held by Selectmen could be sold.

Recommendations:

- Transfer to Conservation Commission
- Examine installing a safe walkway/stairway to the Taunton River across from the ox bow

T-4 Old Forge Road

Location: Small parcel between Liberty Road and Old Forge Road

Map/parcel 20/25

Area: .06 acres

Zoning: R-D

Access: From abutting streets

Handicapped Access: Poor, rough wooded ground, though level with streets

Facilities: A few trees

Use: pocket neighbor woodland

Management/ Maintenance: Unknown; left natural

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) as it could be sold

Recommendations: Examine potential value as a through road or as a piece of neighborhood wildland

T-5 Dundee Drive

Location: Off Vernon Street /Dundee Drive .

Map/Parcel 98/7,31

Areas: 20.1 acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Off Dundee Drive by an unmarked and reportedly little used right-of-way

Facilities: Woods crossed by a powerline running north through a major Ch.61A holding and south through other town lands

Use: Nature study, access to any potential power line trail; little used according to an abutter.

Management/ Maintenance: By Town (despite reportedly being donated cluster open space, this is held by the town rather than by the Conservation Commission according to the Assessors)

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) if held only by the town, but it may be high (in perpetuity) as it was required under the Open Space Community zoning; or if donated with a Conservation Restriction



Mapped but unsigned access to 20.1 acres of reportedly town (not Conservation)-owned open space at Dundee Drive “Open Space Community” cluster development

Recommendations:

- Sign and improve the access point

- Look into use of powerline easement for hiking, and riding through lands to north and south
- Consider merging the management of this land with the adjacent Cobblestone Lane open space
- Transfer this land to Conservation Commission if a homeowners' association is not going to manage it.

T-6 Bob White Lane/Old Forest Street

Location: Bob White Lane off Redwing Drive, east of Vernon Street

Map/parcel: 99/49,50,51,53,55, 65

Area: Approx.9.9 acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Bob White Lane, via Red Wing Rd and Robin Road of Vernon Street

Handicapped Access: Good to lots along streets, poor to low, wet backland

Use: Unused house lots next to new housing plus 7.2 acres of low, wooded backland off Red Wing Drive

Management:/ Maintenance: Not specified; presumably the Town

Degree of Protection: Moderate (Temporary) as could be sold, High if under Conservation Commission.

Recommendations:

- Transfer to Conservation Commission
- Keep as neighborhood open space

T-7 Cross Street

Location: South of Cross Street, east of Jane's Way .

Map/parcel: 110/16

Area: approx. 2.3 acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Cross Street frontage.

Handicapped access: Poor, adjacent to road, but no apparent entrance ways

Facilities: Woods

Use: Neighborhood woodland

Management/Maintenance: Town /minimal

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) as town-owned land could be sold.

Recommendations:

- Keep it as a neighborhood open space
- Transfer to the Conservation Commission

T-8 South Brook/ Town River land off Hayward Street .

Location: East of Hayward Street at junction of South Brook and the Town River ..

Map/Parcels: 23/3

Area: 5.2 acres

Zoning: R-D

Access: Along streets but below grade, low and wet

Handicapped Access: Poor; low wetlands below adjacent streets

Uses: Habitat, nature study, flood storage, views of Brook and River

Management / maintenance: Town/minimal

Degree of Protection: High (essentially in perpetuity) as town-owned land under the Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Protection Act.

Recommendations:

- Explore possible trail /boardwalk along edge of the streams from the South Brook Bridge on Hayward Street to the Town River bridge, to the west on Hayward Street

T-9 Winter Street

Location: South of Winter Street at the corner of Canton Street

Area: 4 acres

Map/Parcels: 76/7, 8, 56

Zoning: R-C

Access: From adjacent streets

Handicapped Access: Fair; ground is level at road's edge but there are no improved trails

Facilities- Pines, small hardwoods and open area at a curve in Winter Street

Uses: Local neighborhood woodland offering relief from local development.

Management/ Maintenance: Selectmen by default. No known maintenance

Degree of Protection - Low (temporary as could be sold)

Recommendations:

- Keep as informal open space
- Consider transfer to the Conservation Commission

T-10 Bedford Street Woods

Location: West side of Bedford Street across from Old State Farm Road, south of Saw Mill Brooks and Ch. 61A cranberry land

Map/parcel: 120/1

Area: 11 acres

Zoning: SBD

Access: Frontage along Bedford Street

Handicapped Access: Poor; level land along road, but no provision for access to the interior

Facilities: Low wet woodland south of Saw Mill Brook and Kravitz cranberry bogs.

Use: Wooded habitat

Management/maintenance: Selectmen by default/ requires minimal maintenance

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary), if held by Selectmen could be sold.

Recommendations:

- Transfer to Conservation Commission or leave with the Selectmen
- Examine relation to adjacent Ch. 61A cranberry land to the north

T-11 Emerald Lane

Location: South of Cross Street, east of Vernon Street

Map/parcels: Map 117/ many parcels from 9 to 43; Map 119/ 80,81,82 Many from lots on either side of Emerald Lane and Ruby Circle

Area:19.1 acres

Zoning:R-A/B

Access: Mapped but undeveloped right-of- way off of Cross Street

Handicapped access: Poor; low wetland with no pathways

Facilities: An unbuilt subdivision with partially-cleared woodland

Use: Unknown

Management/ Maintenance: Selectmen by default/ no maintenance

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) if held by Selectmen it could be sold.

Recommendations:

- Transfer property to Conservation Commission
- Develop an access from the Cross Street right-of-way
- Consider acquisition of a 26.85-acre parcel leading to Sturtevant's Pond as a permanent wooded backdrop to the emerging neighborhood.

T-12 Paul Joseph Lane/Red Mill Road Cluster Land

Location: South of Jaclyn Way, west of Vernon Street

Map/Parcel: 124/68

Area: 16.6 acres

Zoning:R-A/B

Access: Appears to be only from abutting private lots

Facilities: Irregular woodlands; some open land

Use: Though publicly owned, the land appears to function only as common open space for one Open Space Development subdivision.

Management/ Maintenance: Selectmen/unknown maintenance:

Degree of Protection: Limited until protected by a Conservation Restriction, then high and protected in perpetuity.

Recommendations:

- Transfer to Conservation Commission
- Consider acquiring all or parts of parcels or easements giving access from adjacent streets.

T-13 Heather Hills Woods

Location: Southwest of Olde Scotland Links, north of Heather Hills Drive

Map/Parcel: 123/2

Area: 6.15 acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Golf Course; and via an existing access easement to Heather Hills Drive

Use: Woodlands abutting woods on course and potentially giving access to course from Heather Hills neighborhood.

Management /Maintenance: Selectmen by default /maintenance unknown

Degree of Protection: Low (temporary) if held by Selectmen as could be sold.

Recommendations:

- Investigate potential open space value
- Transfer to Conservation Commission or golf course
- Confirm/develop access from Heather Hills Drive.

T-14 Lake Nippenicket Holdings (See also C-8)

Location: At western edge of town, of two on the southwestern edge of Lake, only one has lake frontage. On the eastern side one small house lot has frontage, while three large 1-2+ acre lots and one smaller .4 acre lot lack frontage.

Area - 11.9 acres with lake frontage or adjacent to parcels with frontage; 5.35 acres in house lots mostly off of Bridle Road without frontage

Map/Parcels: 70/34; 82/ 5,7; 83/60;78,79,80

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Off of Rte. 106 at Park and Ride lot; via Elm Street and Chace Rd. in Raynham and through woods and brush to limited town holdings on the west shore; from Bridle Road for lots south of that road on eastern side.

Handicapped accessibility: Poor to town holdings on the west shore given no apparent trails from street to shore. Fair to beach and state boat ramp from park and ride lot.

Facilities: Natural wooded shoreline, closed beach, Park and Ride lot, State boat ramp as described earlier.

Uses: Boating and jet skiing, hiking around Lake, nature observation and shoreline activities as described above

Management/Maintenance: This town land is reportedly managed by the Conservation Commission though the Assessors list it as basic unprotected town land. Other land by State and the respective non- profits as described earlier. Town land is listed under both C-8 and T-14 because it may well be unprotected.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) on unprotected town land; High (in perpetuity) on State, Non-Profit wildlife and conservation land, and Town conservation land.

Recommendations:

- Clarify site availability and explore and support Recreation Commission ideas about developing a boating/sailing program with a boathouse, rescue boat and related off-site swimming lessons, consistent with wildlife protection.
- Work with State Public Access Board to improve state boat ramp, particularly its handicapped accessibility
- Transfer town land with lake frontage to the Conservation Commission
- Have Total Maximum Daily Loads for pollutants (TMDLs) defined if needed for water quality and public health
- Explore possible coordination with Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts /The Nature Conservancy sites.

T-15 Laurel and Wood Sts.

Location: Laurel Street at end of Wood Street.

Map/Parcel: 50/5

Area: 12.2 acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Laurel Street

Facilities: Irregular wet, low-lying woodlands; no identifying signs or specific access points

Use: Habitat, nature study.

Management/ Maintenance: Selectmen by default. Minimal maintenance is required

Degree of Protection: Limited unless under Conservation Commission or protected by Conservation Restriction, then high and protected in perpetuity.

Recommendations:

- Transfer to Conservation Commission if not already under its control

Wolski Trust Lands.

In addition to the above, the Wolski Family Trust has given the town a CR on five riverside acres behind three new houses at 1050-1150 Plymouth Street

Minor Town Holdings

T-16 South of the Office Park.

Map/Parcels: 96/3, 4, 5,10

This is approximately 22.1 acres, south of the office park which is south of Rte. 104 and west of Rte. 24. It is separate from the present protected open spaces, but a portion is protected as part of the park design.

T-17 Land bracketing Rte. 24

Map/Parcels: 96/1; 97/39, 40

This consists of approximately 1.1 acres west of the highway and southeast of the Lake, and 6 wooded acres east of the highway, and on either side of a powerline easement.

T-18 Plymouth Street A house and Lot

Map/Parcel: 36/46 An approximately 1.4-acre lot and house backing on to slightly over 20 acres of open fields.

T-19 South of Plymouth Street.

Map/Parcel: 25/27

A landlocked 1.2-acre lot between Plymouth Street and the Taunton River, probably of greatest interest to an abutting home owner.

T-20 Short Street Lot

Map/Parcel: 67/4a

An approximately 1.7-acre lot with limited frontage on Short Street, backing on to woodlands

T-21 Two Plymouth Street Lots

Map/Parcels: 65/56, 57

Two adjacent lots totaling about 1.1 acres, probably of more interest to abutting homeowners.

T-22 Land between Cobblestone Lane and the Olde Scotland Links

Map/Parcel: 108/5 A partially-wooded 13.75-acre strip crossed by a powerline and located between Cobblestone Lane and its open space, and woods on Golf Course property just north of the Course itself.

This has potential as part of greenway from the Toole Park to the Links as disused under site C-11 in above and under Study S-26 in the Five Year Action Program (Chapter IX.)

T-23 An isolated parcel behind houses on Glenmore Lane and Aberdeen Lane

Map/Parcel: 98/33. A 1.75-acre wooded parcel abutting house lots on three side and adjoining extensive wooded land to the west. This offers a valuable neighborhood open space and might have a potential for a connecting trail along the southern edge of parcel 98/5 to the Dundee Land at T-5 and potential connecting open spaces.

E. Public and Private Recreation Facilities

1. Public Facilities

1.1 Facilities under the Recreation Commission

R-1 Legion Field

Location: Off Route 18

Area: 23.3 acres,

Map/Parcel: 48/86

Zoning: R-D

Access: From Bedford Street, Cottage Street, and Williams School

Handicapped Access: Coming for Recreation Commission

Facilities:

One full-size Baseball diamond

Four smaller-size baseball/softball diamonds

Two T-ball diamonds

Football/Soccer field with bleachers

Two Basketball courts

A Skateboard park (closed)

One multipurpose soccer, football, baseball practice field next to the Office

Uses: The multi-purpose Legion Field complex is used by many programs. In particular it is used for:

- Middle School gym classes
- Middle School Soccer practice



Skate Boarder Flying Legion Field 12/2/07



Skateboarder Landing –Legion Field 12/12/07

- School Baseball practice and games
- Junior Varsity Baseball Games
- School Softball practice and games
- Youth Football practice and games
- Some LaCrosse practice and games
- Little League Practice and games including state all star game and Jimmy Fund game
- Legion baseball practice and games
- Girls Softball practice and games
- Basketball summer clinics and leagues
- General citizen, student and gym class use.
- Skate boarding

Use is growing with the number of participants in each league. The girls' softball league grows larger every year. Youth lacrosse was introduced several years ago and has increased dramatically. Little League has grown to the point of considering splitting into an American League and a National League with concomitant space needs.

Management: Recreation Commission

Maintenance: Recreation Commission, but little maintenance is possible due to intensive use. There is no time or space for closing fields for reseeding, re-grading or other commonly required general maintenance.

Other Needs

- Replacement of the tennis courts. Tennis courts were removed to allow a skateboard park. This was to be moved to Crescent Street next to new Police station at the completion of that station, but there are no present plans to do so. This leaves 8 courts at the old high school. At the same time, courts at the BSC have been reduced from 16 to 4.
- Replacement of playground. The playground was lost to the expansion of the Williams Middle School. There are demands for replacement as it is in great demand by siblings of athletes playing at other Legion Field facilities.

- Replacement of skateboard park
- Better parking, due to multiple use by many leagues

Degree of Protection - High as Recreation land

Recommendations:

- Expand fields elsewhere, preferably near schools, especially the High School or Middle School
- Seek shared use of facilities with the College or BCC
- Replace the lost playground, preferably at a school site
- Examine the possible effects of the proposed Premier Sports Center on town facilities
- Replace skate board park at appropriate, easily observed location
- Replace tennis courts, if needed

R-2 Scotland Field

Location: Off of Vernon Street

Area: 6.7 acres

Map/parcel: 72 / Parcel 33

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From adjacent Prospect Street

Handicapped Access: Level site, details coming from Recreation Commission

Facilities:

Softball Field

Multi-purpose soccer/lacrosse/archery field

Basketball court

Small Playground - One swing set

Small maintenance building

There is no room to expand Scotland Field. The parking lot was enlarged several years ago and the lower softball field was converted to an open field used for soccer

Uses: Scotland Field is used primarily by the Men's Softball League for practice and games. The lower field is used for soccer, lacrosse, and archery. The basketball court is used by local residents, as is a small playground. No data on the frequency of use. Growing use for soccer and lacrosse with the increasing popularity of girls softball.

Management: Recreation Commission

Maintenance: Recreation Commission. Vandalism is a concern. Routine maintenance is hampered by lack of an on-site garage requiring equipment to be towed to the site.

Degree of Protection: High as Recreation land

Recommendations:

- Monitor uses to identify future needs
- Add comfort facilities
- Improve minimal play area
- Monitor status and potential of adjacent Ch. 61A area

R-3 Crescent Street Fields (former Hogg's Farm)

Location: Crescent Street South of Route 104

Area: 49.9 acres

Map/parcel: 47 /115

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Along Crescent Street behind the new police station on Pleasant Street

Handicapped Access: Conservation land can be reached along level ground; future trails should be handicapped accessible.

Facilities: None now. Planned facilities are:

Three Softball Diamonds for Girls Softball; Construction is starting with overall grading

A small Playground *

Surrounding walking trail

Uses: Area to east is to be recreation site; wooded area west of stream is natural open space

Much use is expected since growing girls sports have increased the number of softball teams.

Legion Field can no longer accommodate girls softball and Little League teams so Crescent Street area is expected to provide needed fields.

Management: Recreation Commission; possible Conservation Commission oversight of wetlands open space uses.

Maintenance: Recreation area by Recreation Commission with planned shed/garage for equipment.



Work underway at the new Crescent Street Fields

Photo by Laura Campbell

Recommendations:

- Complete ball fields
- Build a field house if feasible, giving the Commission a place to run programs, and the town some indoor recreation space.
- Monitor use to identify future needs.
- Define conservation area, add trails along stream, and add interpretive material
- Develop trails through site and on to adjacent Starr Park land to the northwest.

R-4 Rainbow's End Playground

Location: Flagg Street, just west of and contiguous with Flagg Street Soccer fields

Area: 49.6 acres in total parcel, playground uses are on a small corner of the parcel.

Map/parcel: 88/33 Playground and soccer field use a portion of the State's "North Hay Fields"

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: By path from Flagg Street and through woods from adjacent soccer fields

Handicapped Access: Ground level is accessible from street after crossing a very low bridge. **Facilities:** Playground, major castle-like timber play structure, swings tables etc.

Bathrooms at adjacent Bridgewater Youth Soccer Fields are not available due to different management. The substantial play structure was designed by playground designer Robert Leathers and built in 1991 by 651 volunteers organized by resident Steve Chandler. A baseball diamond and expanded parking were proposed on the adjacent BCC land, but the state refused.

Use: Almost constant playground use. As the only full-size playground in Bridgewater, it is in demand particularly by local families. Also proximity to Flagg Street soccer fields allows younger children to play here while older siblings play soccer.

Management: Recreation Commission

Maintenance: By Recreation Commission though on State's North Hayfield land. Substantial play structure and grounds get periodic preventative maintenance.

Recommendations:

- Monitor use to identify future needs
- Possibly add varied accessible equipment, make bridge flush with grade
- Add safe building materials to allow adventure playground activities.
- Clarify access to soccer fields bathrooms or add some on site
- Make any changes needed for increased handicapped accessibility
- Refurbish existing facilities as needed

R-5 Starr Park/Playground

Location: Northwest of Hogg land with access from Starr Road

Area: 10.5 acres

Map /parcel: 47/128

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Hogg land or by rough right-of-way from Starr Road.

Handicapped Access: limited, rough paths

Facilities: woods, not developed yet.

Use: hiking, nature study, habitat, informal neighborhood natural open space use

Management: Recreation Commission

Recommendations:

- Work with neighbors and donors to identify best uses. This may be as natural woodlands given future mixed uses (playfields/ conservation lands) planned for adjacent former Hogg Farm lands
- Seek funds and volunteers to develop site if needed.
- Develop trails connecting the site to the Crescent Street facilities



Part of volunteer-built play structure at Rainbow's End Playground with climbers to rear



Popular alternative structure for climbing and jumping at Rainbow's End Playground

1.2 Facilities under other Management

R-6 Jenny Leonard Park

Location: North of Cherry Street just east of Walnut Street



Area: 10.4 acres

Map/Parcel: 52/11

Access: Up a few railroad tie steps or along a partially overgrown curved dirt drive to a low, wooded hill. No designated parking, a few cars could use driveway if improved.

Facilities: Small playground with under-maintained slide, swings, see-saw, turntable, an overgrown basketball court, picnic table, roofed bad-weather play space, and a vandalized/dismantled bathroom structure.

Handicapped Access: Poor by steps up from street, fair by sloping overgrown driveway from street, Site is hard to use given irregular ground surface.

Use: Reportedly in diminishing use due to disrepair, and past heavy use. Recreation Commission reports that with only one “full-sized” playground in the town at Rainbow’s End and constant town growth, it would be beneficial to have a playground here on the east side of town.

Management: By the town (not by Recreation Commission) as general town property. Ms. Jenny Leonard willed the land to the town to repay town for elderly care she had received. Town sold two house lots and allowed a neighborhood association to use the rest for a playground. The association later disbanded as people moved away and children grew up and the land remains with the town.



Broken swing, functioning turntable and see-saw base viewed from slide at Jenny Leonard Park

Maintenance: Under-maintained and vandalized. Picnic table is missing boards and basketball court is overgrown-reverting to woods; bathroom is a shell with plumbing gone; and handsome sign is partially obscured by growth as it sits on a secluded hill. Slide, swings, see-saws and roundabout are basically intact but need work.

Degree of Protection: Moderate, (temporary) as it could be sold if in general town ownership. It would be high if held by the Recreation Commission

Plans for Expansion/Modification: People have called to have this very attractive site and facility refurbished and improved, but sporadic improvements have been quickly vandalized. Parking and better signage would be the first steps to make this essentially very attractive playground more accessible to the public and more visible.

Recommendations:

- Monitor use to identify future needs
- Refurbish existing playground
- Expand access road and add parking
- Explore adventure playground potential with safe, low-cost, expendable materials for kids to build with - as they already do.
- Negotiate use of bathrooms at adjacent Bridgewater Youth Soccer fields
- Transfer to Recreation Commission



Intact bad weather playshed at Jenny Leonard, board is not a brace, but a missing see-saw plank apparently creatively used for access to an improvised loft



Jenny Leonard Park basketball court returning to nature

R-7 Town River Landing

Location: Behind former Highway Barn off of Plymouth St, just downstream of Rte. 18 and across the Town River from Stiles and Hart Conservation Area

Area: 14.8 acres . This is the area of the former Highway Dept. yard; the Landing is a small portion of it.

Map/Parcel: 21/167

Access: By driveway and informal parking area off of Spring Street. This is signed both “No Trespassing” and “Bridgewater Landing.”

Handicapped Access: Limited due to steep slope of the ramp

Facilities: Curved, graded, rip-rap lined, paved non-vehicular ramp going down to Town River for launching and removing small hand-carried boats. Site also has former highway buildings leased to businesses by town.

Frequency of Use: New, unknown.

Management: Selectmen

Maintenance: By volunteer Park Stewards; in good condition now; steep ramp may need work in future.

Degree of Protection: Moderate (Temporary) as could be sold unless made Recreation or Conservation land reflecting its purpose and use.

Recommendations:

- Implement footbridge over Town River giving access to the Stiles and Hart Conservation Parkland as proposed by the Landing’s sponsors
- Revise Signage to welcome public with correct name.
- Clarify responsibility for managing and maintaining the Landing
- Clarify exact area of this parcel to be developed as river side parkland

R-8 Olde Scotland Links Golf Course

Location: off of Vernon and Cedar Streets

Area: 210 acres

Map/parcels: 108/1, 2, 7; 116/7

Facilities:

Golf course. A Premier course, rated one of the five best from Boston to the Cape.

Course uses two triangles, north and south of Spruce Street, with a third triangle between Pine and Spruce Streets used for practice. Course is ahead of trends in being green with careful use of fertilizer and pesticides and has been certified by Audubon Society as wildlife friendly.

Golf Commission reports need for a clubhouse and hopes to use 10 modular units from McEwain School grouped around a new roofed over area to create a clubhouse.

Use: Used nine months of the year for golf though demand has declined according to the Golf Commission. Possible informal seasonal use for winter sports but Golf Commission is concerned about damage from skiing over light snow.

Management: Golf Commission

Maintenance: Golf Commission, no known major needs at present.

Degree of Protection: High (permanent) as held for recreation use

Recommendations:

- Examine opportunities to expand golfing and non-golfing activities.
- Seek acquisition of adjacent town-owned land to north (108/5) and southwest (123/2) unless it is better served as Conservation land
- Develop clubhouse proposed to broaden activities and services

R-9 Vernon Street/Chaffee farm

Location: east of Vernon Street, south of Forest Street

Area: Referred to as 44.8 acres, but apparent parcels total 60.03 acres

Map/Parcels:

109/ 8 44.8 acres

109/12 5.0 acres

109/13 6.0 acres

109 /22 . 4.23 acres

60.03 acres

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: From Vernon Street, with other frontage on Forest Street and Cross Street

Handicapped Access: Very limited, but it is not an official recreation area

Facilities: Former farm land (crops and hay), gravel pit and wetlands crossed by NW-SE powerline easement.

Use: Used by Highway Dept. for sand, leaf-composting and material storage. Used by ATV and dirt bike riders informally, but this is prohibited due to risks and neighbor's complaints.

This portion of the farm was proposed to be the Vernon Park Recreation Site in the 1995 Open Space Plan. The design by Silva Engineering Associates included four softball fields, a

football/soccer field, basketball courts, two playgrounds near the softball fields and a large indoor facility. However powerlines and encroaching wetlands were noted in an unfavorable Year 2000 feasibility study.

More recent plans for passive recreation include walking trails (as there are no designated trails in Bridgewater according to the Recreation Commission), picnic areas, some ball fields for practice, and general open space. The Commission notes that “As time passes and this area is not developed, wetlands are encroaching and less and less of the land remains useable...” This suggests carefully delineating wetlands lines before designing new facilities.

Management: Golf Course Committee now, though used by Town/Highway Dept.

Maintenance: Highway Department

Degree of Protection: High (in perpetuity) if held for recreation or conservation, moderate (temporary) if left as general town land.

Recommendations:

- Clarify ownership and potential for various uses
- Delineate wetlands
- Identify/confirm future needs after completion of other fields and evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Premier sports facility

1.3 Regional School District Facilities

RS -1 Bridgewater (“Mitchell”) Elementary School

Location: East of South Street across from South Drive

Area: 22.2 acres

Map/parcel: 62/19

Facilities: Small play structure to right as one enters

A basic playground (swings, slides, 2 climbing structures, benches to rear of school)

A second basic playground with 2 climbing structures, swings, and slides at edge of an apparent ball field to north of school building,

Two basketball hoops behind school

Use: School playgrounds, presumed neighborhood use

Management/ Maintenance: By Bridgewater Raynham School District

Plans: School is to remain an elementary school

Degree of Protection: Moderate (Temporary), as use of property could change some day.

Recommendations:

- Study needs, demands and any required needed modification or expansion

RS-2 Old Bridgewater - Raynham Regional High School

Location: East of Center St, north of Pleasant Street

Area: Listed as “36.5 acres” but totals 21.012.

Map/Parcels

33/47 - 20.0 acres

33/48 - 1.012 acres

21.012 acres

Facilities: Football field with large bleachers,
Softball field

Eight tennis courts

A football practice area

Multi-purpose play space

Uses: Possibly changing with conversion to a middle school

Management: Bridgewater-Raynham School District

Maintenance: Bridgewater-Raynham School District

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) as needs and uses could change

Recommendations:

- Study changing needs
- Maintain present recreation facilities

RS-3 Williams Middle School

Location: South of Cottage Street and north of Legion Field

Area: Part of 23.6-acre Legion Field site

Map/parcel: 48/86

Facilities: Uses facilities at adjacent Legion Field

Use: Unknown; proposed in 2001 for conversion to an early childhood center (K-2) after construction of new high school, but it was recently rebuilt/expanded.

Management: School property is maintained by School District; Recreation facilities by Commission.

Maintenance: School District .

Degree of Protection: Moderate (temporary) as use of property could change some day.

Recommendations:

- Clarify maintenance of recreation facilities if they are not school property
- Study needs, demands and any needed modification or expansion.

RS-4 Burnell Campus School on BSC campus (Closed June 2008)

Location: On east campus

Area: Very small; a few thousand square feet

Map/parcel: Part of a much larger college parcel

Facilities: Small Playground - swings, slides etc. for K-6 students and the BCS Children's (day care) Center in same building, but operated by College. The school was reclaimed by the College in 6/08.

Use: By Burnell Students, not neighborhood

Management: School District .

Maintenance: By BSC, Staffed by BR School District

Degree of Protection:

Moderate, (Temporary) as the use of property could change some day.

Recommendations:

- Explore continued use a neighborhood playground

R-5 New Bridgewater Raynham High School

Location: 415 Center St, west of old High School

Area: 56.9 acres

Map/parcels

33/1 - 40.39 acres

33/5 – 11. 0 acres

33/79 3.40 acres

33/6 2.15 acres

56.94 acres

Facilities: Gym, football field, softball field, track, and soccer field

Use: School and associated athletics

Management: School District

Maintenance: School District

Degree of Protection; Moderate (temporary) as use of property could change some day.

Recommendations:

- Consider leasing unused farmland on North Street until needed for school purposes.
- Formally allow after-hours community use if needed

2. State Facilities

CoR-1 Bridgewater State College Swimming Pool - Limited use by Bridgewater Recreation Commission for swimming lessons and related programs.

CoR-2 Lake Nippenicket Boat Ramp and Beach - Boating; prohibited swimming

CoR-3 Bridgewater State College (BSC) Kelly Gym - Limited uses

CoR-4 BSC Swenson Field and Track - Limited Use

CoR-5 BSC Tennis Courts -Available

CoR-6 Great Hill Trails (largely town-owned) limited use for walking, jogging
Source: Recreation Commission

3. Non-Profit facilities

NPR-1 Flagg Street Soccer fields

Location: Flagg Street, just west of RR track, north of signed BCC firing range and adjacent to Rainbow Playground. This is a portion of the BCC north Hay Fields

Area: 24 acres est., a small corner of a much larger parcel

Map/Parcel: 76/on map; parcels are not indicated

Zoning: R-A/B

Access: Level parking lot off of Flagg Street

Handicapped Access: Level parking lot and road, but field house has two steps to enter

Facilities: Room for 8 soccer games, field house, several small bleachers, many movable goal structures.

Use: Soccer in season. Informal winter use, but dog walking is prohibited

Management/ Maintenance: Bridgewater Youth Soccer Inc.

Degree of protection: Moderate Low, (temporary) as state could sell land for another use.

Recommendations:

- Resolve any safety issues with adjunct BCC firing range
- Expand allowed off season uses
- Better control parking



Extensive Flagg Street Soccer Fields looking toward Flagg Street

NPR-2 Handi Kids Camp on Pine Street

Location: Lower Pine Street, west of Olde Scotland Links

Map /Parcel: 107/5

Zoning: R-A/B

Area: 18 acres.

Access: Off Pine Street

Handicapped Access: Assumed, but information is not required

Facilities: Buildings, sports areas in camp for handicapped children.

Use: Seasonal camp.

Management, Maintenance: Non-profit operator

Degree of Protection: Moderate (Temporary) as could be sold for another use.

Recommendations: Explore relationship to golf course, possible sharing of facilities with town/neighborhood.

4. Private, Commercial Facilities

Pv.- 1 The Dome - (Bridgewater Sports Complex) Former Inflatable structure on Rte. 18 now a masonry building

Location: 350 Bedford Street, Rte. 18 south of Center

Area: Unknown

Zoning: BB

Access: Off a level road

Handicapped Access: Assumed; information is not required

Facility: Masonry building holding two small soccer fields, one softball field and basketball court plus small practice and clinic areas .

Use: Year-round indoor sports

Management/Maintenance: Up to private operator

Degree of protection: Low (Temporary) as could be sold for another use

Recommendations: Resolve any peak traffic issues.



Informal recreation; fishing on privately-owned Skeeter Mill Pond (“Flynn’s Pond”) with red bench at owner’s inviting sitting area (signed “Rest Easy”) in distance

Pv. -2 Bridgewater Skating Rink

Location: Bedford Park off of Rte 18 south of the Center

Area: 6.4acres

Map/Parcel: 112/1

Zoning; SBC

Access: Off a level road

Handicapped Access: Assumed; information is not required

Facility: Masonry build holding two ice skating rinks .

Use: Busy, much hockey use; also public skating 12-2 daily, Saturday evenings (including Extreme Skating with a DJ) and Sunday afternoons

Management/Maintenance: Up to private operator.

Degree of Protection: Low as could be sold for another use

Recommendations:

- Resolve any peak traffic issues.
- Take into consideration when planning public facilities

Pv-3 Golf Driving Range, just north of the Bridgewater Skating Rink

Location: 1221 Bedford Street, Rte. 18 south of the Center

Area: 58.99 acres

Map/Parcel: 111/13 (and possibly also including 116/7 adding 25 acres)

Zoning: SBD

Access: Off of a level road

Handicapped Access: Assumed; information is not required

Facility: 28-tee golf driving range

Use: Golf Practice

Management/Maintenance: Up to private operator.

Degree of Protection: Low as could be sold for another use

Recommendations:

None

Prospective Private Facility The Premier Sports Center proposed for farm land at the north end of Elm Street would have three soccer fields, one baseball field and one softball field along with a 31,200 square foot sports equipment warehouse and a 241,000 square foot building housing indoor athletic facilities. The proposed indoor facilities are two soccer fields, four basketball courts, a fitness center and batting cage. The cost of using these and their likely availability are not known, but their presence may affect the demand for planned public facilities in the town. This should be considered in continued planning for public facilities.



Young Hikers “Taking a Rest”

Photograph by Anne Swarce.

Table V- 2

Total Recreation Facilities

Type	Location	Size/Facilities/Capacities
PUBLIC		
Community Parks		
None		
Playgrounds		
Playground	Scotland Field	Small playground
Playground	Crescent St. Fields (Hogg's)	Planned small Pgnd.
Rainbow's End Pgnd.	Flagg St., by soccer fields	Imaginative play structure
Jenny Leonard Park	Cherry St.	Playground on wooded site.
Starr Park/Playground	Off Starr Rd.	Attractive undeveloped woodlands given for a park/playground
Mitchell Elem. School	South St	Two small playgrounds, one play area
Old High School	Center St.	Play space
Burnell Play Grounds	Ex Burnell School at BSC	Two small playgrounds for closed school and day care center
Skating Rinks		
None		
Ball Fields		
Baseball Diamond	At Legion Field	Standard
Four baseball/ softball diamonds	“ “ “ “	Smaller
Two T-ball diamonds	“” “ “	Standard
Football/ Soccer Field with bleachers	“ “ “ “	Multi-purpose
Multi-purpose fields+	“ “ “ “	Two
Football/soccer /LaCrosse baseball practice field	“ “ “ “	One
Softball field	Scotland Field	One
Multi purpose	“ “ “ “	One
Soccer, LaCrosse, Archery Field	“ “ “ “	One

Softball Diamonds	Crescent St. Fields (Hogg's Farm)	Three Planned
Football field with bleachers	Old High School	Standard
Softball Field	“ “ “ “	Standard
Football Practice Area	“ “ “ “	
Football field	New High School	Standard
Softball Field	“ “ “ “	Standard
Soccer Field	“ “ “ ”	Standard
Soccer Fields	Flagg St.	10+ fields on BCC North Hay Fields managed by non-profit Bridgewater Youth Soccer
Tennis Courts		
Courts	Old High School	Eight courts
Courts	At BSC	Two available s
Gymnasia		
Gym	New High School	Gym
Gym	BSC	Limited use
Basketball Courts		
Courts	At Legion Field	Two courts
Court	Scotland Field	One court
Skate Board Parks		
One park	At Legion Field	One park
Track		
Track	At new High School	Standard
Swenson Field/Track	At BSC	Limited use
Walking Trail		
Trail	Crescent St. Fields (Hogg's Farm)	Planned
Greenway Connections	Throughout the town	Planned
Boat Landings		
Town River Landing	Old Highway Dept., off Spring St.	Canoe/ kayak
Lake Nippenicket Ramp	Off Pleasant St.	State boat ramp, trailerable

		outboards, inboards and sail boats
Golf Courses		
Olde Scotland Links	Off Vernon and Cedar Sts.	Premium 18 hole course
Potential Fields		
Chaffee farm	Remaining farm land formerly proposed for up to five ballfields, basketball courts, playground and trails	Inactive proposal
Swimming Pools		
BSC Pool	At College	Long term use for lessons etc.
PRIVATE		
Golf Courses		
None	None	
Golf Driving Range		
Deer Hollow Range	1221 Bedford St.	Range with 28 tees
Skating Rinks		
Bridgewater Skating Rink	Bedford Park off Rte. 18, south of Center	Two busy rinks for school hockey and public use
Indoor Sports Complexes		
Bridgewater (indoor) Sports Complex	Rte. 18, South of Center	Two small soccer fields, one small softball field, one basketball court and practice areas
Premier Sports Center	Farm land off Elm St	Proposed indoor and outdoor soccer fields, basketball courts, fitness center, batting cage, and baseball and softball fields

F. Conservation Restrictions (CRs)

A number of parcels have been put under Conservation Restrictions (CRs). granted to the town or to a non-profit entity by the owners. The CRs prevent further development of the land or degrading use of it, especially use threatening water supplies, but do not usually permit access or use by the general public unless the land is held for that purpose. The CRs must be approved by the Secretary or Energy and Environmental affairs. The following table is based one supplied by that office. As it indicates, seven CRs have been granted in the town and one has been “closed Out” leaving six in Place. One other at the riverside Perkins Farm off Cherry Street has been proposed but is not yet recorded. Most of these have been discussed earlier in Ch. V, as noted.

Conservation Restrictions in Bridgewater

Grantor	Grantee	Acres	Term	Received/ Approved	Map/Parcel Book/Page	Comments
Albert Schofield	Town	-	-	5/5/74	-	Ret'd and close out 12/27/91
Trustees of Bismark Realty	Town	21.70 Assessors say 19.6 acres	Perm.	4/13/93 5/3/94	12861/220	Pheasant Run Cluster Subdivision on Town River, Limited accessibility See NPC-2 in Ch.V
Phyllis Packard	Wildlands Trust of SE Mass.	10.00 Assessor say 12.7 acres	Perm.	8/26/99 5/23/00	18551/238	300' of Scenic Taunton River Frontage See NPT- 2 in Ch.V No access
Chaves & Cincotta, Inc.	Town	45.44 (whole parcel)	Perm	9/20/01 4/11/02	- -	Open land behind Home Nook Subdivision (Harvest Lance) Large but largely landlocked See See NPC-1 in Ch. V
Wolski Family Trust	Town (c/o Cons. Comm.)	5.00	Perm	6/20/05 7/28/05	- -	Five riverside acres behind three new houses at 1050-1150 Plymouth St.
Bridgewater Lakeside LLC/Campenelli	Wildlands Trust of SE Mass.	88.6	Perm.	3/28/06 12/27/06	- -	Extensive area on east shore of Lake Nippenicket, managed with The Nature Conservancy. See

						NPT-3
Owners of Perkins Farm	Town?	70.5 acres	Perm.?	-	-	A 70.5 acre CR along Taunton River is part of approved Child's Bridge cluster subdivision but nothing appears to have been processed.

Sources: Mass. Exec. Office of Energy and Envir. Affairs; Bridgewater Cons Comm.& Planning Board

G. Unprotected or Minimally Protected Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest and Potential, and their Environmental Sensitivity.

See Figure V-1 Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

The Environmental sensitivity reflects the sites depiction on the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program's (NHESP) maps in Chapter IV.

UPL-1. Private land around Lake Nippenicket

This has scattered Potential Vernal Pools, some Primary Forest to the north, abuts some Natural Communities of Atlantic White Cedar Bog and related fens, and is all on the BioMap,

UPL-2. Remaining private portions of Hockomock Swamp land

Most is on the BioMap; and much is Primary Forest, and contains 6+ Potential Vernal Pools (PVPs)

UPL-3. Streamside open field portions of farmland along the Taunton River

Two farms contain Potential Vernal Pools, one also contains some Primary Forest, is Priority Habitat, and abuts the Living Waters Core .

UPL-4. Streamside partially-wooded farm land

As above, some of this contains PVPs, along with a fringe of Primary Forest, and portions are on the BioMap, and abut Living Waters Core.

UPL- 5. Streamside Matfield River lands including the junction of the Town and Matfield Rivers (along a powerline) where the Taunton River starts.

This contains 6-7 Potential Vernal Pools (PVPs.)

UPL-6. Selected private lands around Carver's Pond

This contains 4+ PVPs

UPL-7. The two woodlands parcels west of the Aldrich Street possibly making a

wildlife corridor across North Street to the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area through small intervening parcels. This contains 1 or 2 PV Ps, while the destination area is on the BioMap, contains many Potential Vernal Pools and much Primary Forest, and is largely in the Red Maple Swamp Natural Community.

UPL-8. The streamside 61B lands just south of Summer Street These contain 2+ PVPs, and contain or abut a strip of Riverside Priority Habitat

UPL-9. Streamside Stiles and Hart 61A land on either side of BCC lands These are in/about riverside Priority Habitat, and contain 8-10 PV Pools

UPL-10. The Ch. 61A land and other private parcels completing corridor from the Land to the Olde Scotland Links. These contain at least one Potential Vernal Pool,

UPL-11 Private land at Skeeter Mill Pond (“Flynn’s Pond”) - only if needed for permanent protection of the pond. This very popular fishing area is just downstream from two Potential Vernal Pools.

UPL-12. Connections from the ill-defined Harvest Lane open space through to Grange Park to the west, and south perhaps to Sanford Drive This appears to contain at least one PVP.

UPL-13. Potential expansion of the State Forest by adding land along South Brook to the north and to Walnut Street to the east along. The areas abutting the Forest contain 2-3 PVPs.

UPL-14. A possible South Brook-side trail running from the expanded State Forest to the town’s streamside land at Hayward and Whitman Streets - for future study. This alignment contains at least one PVP.

UPL-15. A possible connection between the town’s Sprague Hill water tower to nearby town woodlands at T-1 to the north- for future study. The tower site appears to be in mapped Primary Forest.

UPL-16. Possible expansion of the Titicut Conservation Area by adding adjacent town water land (WD-6) and the multi-resourced Taylor farm land across the Taunton River in Middleboro with connecting footbridges - for future study.

The Conservation Area and the Water Department land are mapped as on the BioMap, in Priority Habitat, and having at least one PVP. .

UPL-17. Seeking an interim agricultural use for the vacant farmland at the eastern end of the new High School. It is not in any mapped habitat area.

UPL-18 . Protection of the wooded riverside portion of the Chapter 61A land immediately east of Vernon Street and south of Green Street., and its possible streamside connection to the Water Department land at WD-4 and to the adjacent Titicut Conservation Parkland. It is on the BioMap and the mapped Priority Habitat

UPL-19. Protection of the major wooded swamp under Ch.61B between Scotland Street and the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area and its trails from adjacent industrial uses. It is in the mapped Red Maple Swamp Natural Community and on the Bio Map, and contains at least 4 PVPs.

UPL-20. Town land in the former Emerald Lane unbuilt subdivision and private land offering a potential greenway from just South of the Vernon Street Land (R-9) to Sturdevant's Pond

UPL-21 Acquisition and development of 60+ acres of woods, sand pits and open water on a Ch. 61A site west of Bedford Street and east of South Street for swimming, skating and picnicking, possibly at town initiative.

UPL-22 Approximately 200 acres of inactive low-lying privately-owned farmland (not under current use taxation) south of Curve Street. It has about 2,400 feet of frontage along the Taunton River. The land is on the BioMap with some 1830s Forest along the western edge. Its potential for restored agriculture or habitat use need to be explored.

Table V- 3

Abbreviations Used in the Report Text and on Figures V-1 and IX-1

BS	Land Managed by the Selectmen for other than Open Space/Recreation Purposes
C	Land managed by the Conservation Commission or protected by other town departments
Co	Protected Land managed by the Commonwealth
CoR	State Recreation Facilities at the College or Lake Nippenicket
HD	Highway and Forestry Department Lands Managed for other than Open Space/ Recreation Purposes
NPC	Non-Profit Managed Open Space in Cluster Developments
NPR	Non-Profit Recreation Facilities
NPT	Non-Profit Trust Protected Land

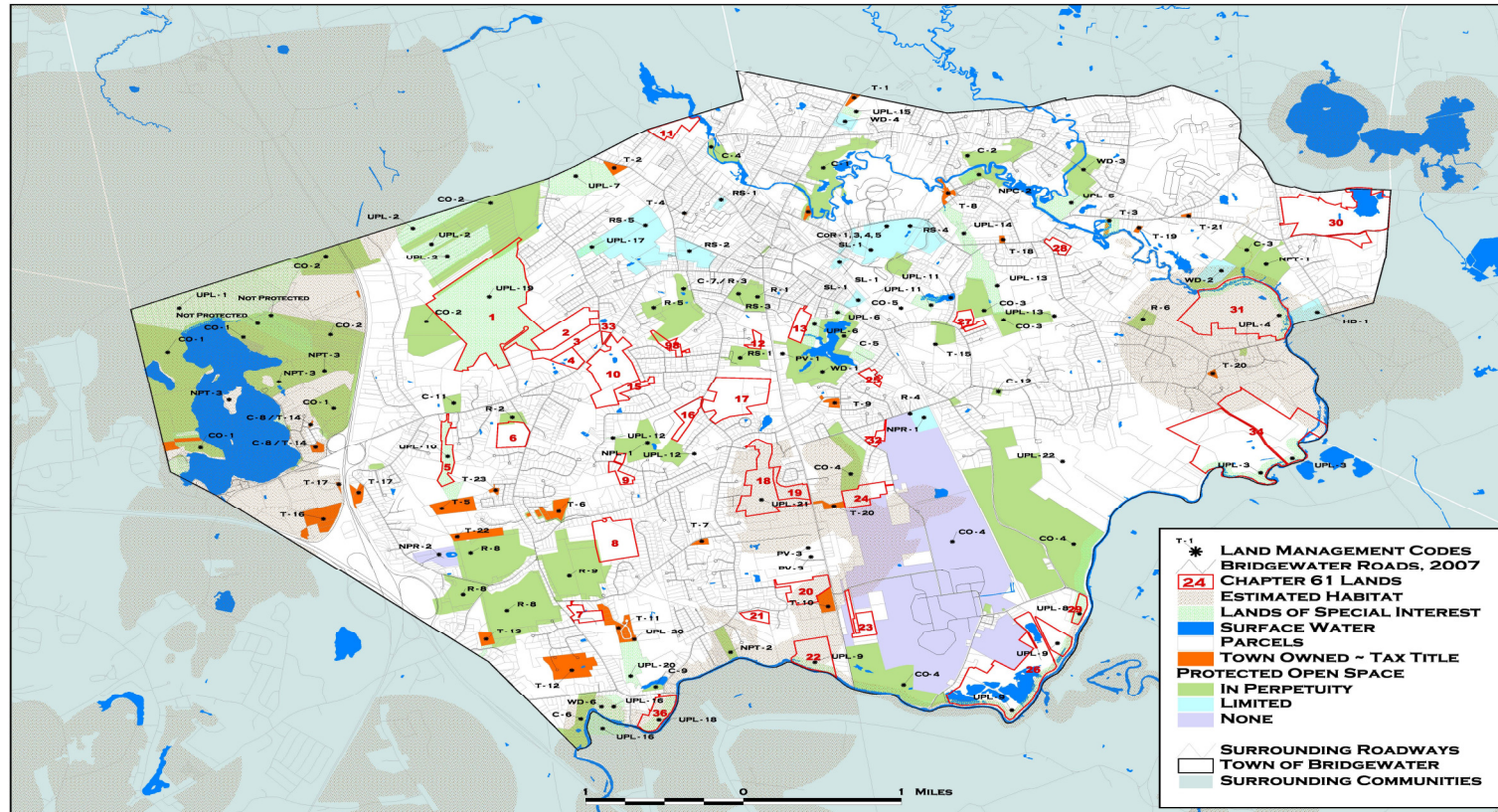
- Pv** Private (Commercial) Recreation Facilities
- SL** Land Managed by the State for other than Open Space/Recreation Purposes
- R** Town Recreation Facilities under the Recreation Commission or other town bodies
- RS** Regional School District Recreation Facilities
- T** Minimally Protected Town Land, Generally Tax Title Holdings. Some are de facto open space appropriate for Conservation Commission Management
- UPL** **Unprotected or Minimally Protected Lands of Conservation and Recreation** interest and Potential.
- WD** Water Department Land Managed for other than Open Space/Recreation Purposes

BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE PLAN

LANDS OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION INTEREST



FIGURE V-1



OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL

70 SCHOOL STREET

BROCKTON, MA 02301

SEPTEMBER, 2008

GIS DATA SOURCES: MASSGIS, EOTPW, TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER

VI. Community Goals

- A. Process The following draws on discussions with the Open Space Committee and on the goals in the 2005 Plan Submission
- B. Vision: A balanced community combining a strong traditional center with varied neighborhoods and discrete industrial/commercial areas set off by a combination of river front, woodlands, grasslands and agriculture, and protected water resources structured around a linked town-wide open space system. There would be some open space near all existing and future development forming either a backdrop to a neighborhood or its focus, while the linked greenway system would form a town-wide network. The town would reflect continued growth management, application of Smart Growth and Low Impact Design principles, and an active open space preservation program. The combined holdings would offer challenging recreation resources for all.
- C. Goals Statement This is the basis for the statement of Goals and Objectives following the discussion of Needs.

Bridgewater's major open space and recreation goals are the following:

1. Agriculture Related

- A. To preserve and cultivate public and private agricultural lands using tools such as Conservation Restrictions, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, Community Preservation Act funds, appropriate zoning of present farmland, and a local Agricultural Commission, along with other state resources such as the Farm Viability and Environmental Enhancement programs
- B. Identification of potential community garden sites and establishment of such a program. This might be done in collaboration with the community gardens program at the Old State Farm which the BSC Office of Community Partnerships is developing in partnership with the Department of Corrections.

2. Open Space Related

- A. To support the efforts of the Conservation and Recreation Commissions to maintain the beauty of Bridgewater and its landscape, to provide varied recreational opportunities for all, and to increase general environmental awareness, and awareness of the town's cultural and natural history.
- B. To create a town-wide linked open space system or network of holdings and connecting trails which in turn could be connected, if feasible, to open space provided next to or near every neighborhood.

- C. To enhance and expand the river-oriented Conservation Parkland System drawing heavily on the findings and recommendations of the site-specific management plans.
- D. To increase public awareness of existing open space and recreation areas, through varied media; signs, maps and web page features.

3. Water Related

- A. To protect environmentally sensitive areas, including the quality and capacity of the public water supply and preservation of riparian land along streams, lakes and ponds, and to enhance and protect wildlife corridors
- B. To support and adopt Low Impact Design strategies reducing runoff and maximizing ground water recharge, to consider recharge value when prioritizing open space acquisitions, and to implement flood control strategies such as augmenting flood storage areas, and actively managing dams and control structures

4. Smart Growth Related

- A. To encourage future town growth and development to follow Smart Growth Principles by incorporating them in the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, Zoning Bylaw, Board of Health Regulations, and related regulatory board guidelines and policies, and through possible use of new tools such as Transferable Development Rights.

5. Habitat Related

- A. To protect varied upland and aquatic wildlife, particularly increasing the fisheries productivity of water bodies, protecting vernal pools.
- B. To enhance/ protect wildlife corridors through the creation of a town-wide linked open space system

6. Recreation Related

- A. To provide varied opportunities for organized and casual, sports-oriented and nature-oriented, upland and water-based outdoor recreation
- B. To expand opportunities for passive and active recreation via facility improvements, greenway connections, and a town-wide/regionally-linked recreational /functional bicycle and pedestrian trail system building on previous proposals

8. Management Related

To better organize, expand and adequately fund the professional and volunteer maintenance and improvement of Bridgewater's Parklands System

9. Open Space Committee Related

- A. Creation of a standing Open Space Committee to make this plan a living document to be used, and to evolve with changing needs, opportunities, and concerns.



Haying

Photo by the Murray Family

VII Analysis of Needs

These needs reflect the goals above and earlier analyses of the community's issues, resources and opportunities. While needs can be subjective and are often difficult to distinguish from wants, these needs are those implied in the Goals and Objectives and earlier data, and those derived from the standards in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). A summary of needs organized by major areas of concern follows.

A. Resource Protection Needs

- Protection of the riparian areas of the Taunton, Matfield and Town Rivers
- Protection and continued agricultural use of remaining farmland, whether or not under current-use taxation
- Continued protection of ground water and surface water resources
- Preservation or creation of connections between blocks of woodlands or other similar or symbiotic habitats e.g., the combination of pond shores and woods needed by some turtles.
- Repair or improvement of fish ladders needed on present or restorable fish runs
- Protection of remaining privately-owned land around Lake Nippenicket and Carver's Pond
- Examination of the sensitivity of the Carver's Pond wells to surface water quality in order to protect the supply while allowing expanded recreation uses
- Continued steps to measure and counter any eutrophication in Carver's Pond, Skeeter Mill Pond, (Flynn's Pond) or other water bodies.
- Examination of the prospects and needs of anadromous (herring) fisheries along the major streams and impoundments in cooperation with the Bridgewater-West Bridgewater Town River Fishery Committee and action on any identified needs.
- Maintenance of increasingly rare open grassland habitats along the rivers, Old State Farm and elsewhere. In particular, developing appropriate management plans and scheduling any haying around the birds' nesting and breeding seasons.

B. Community Needs

1- Conservation Needs

- Creation of a town-wide system with varied, usable, open space abutting or close to all neighborhoods
- Complementing the above by creating a linked system of conservation lands and open spaces threading through neighborhoods and connecting major resources
- Protection of major outlying free-standing holdings such as the Lehtola Farm meadows sloping down to the wooded Taunton River bank.
- Protecting remaining private shoreline on Carver's Pond and Lake Nippenicket.
- Acquisition and trail use of key portions of streamside land such as along South Brook
- Acquisition of scattered Ch.61, 61A and 61B holdings and other properties to create extensive neighborhood open spaces
- Planning and developing proposed trails on the open space portion of the former Hogg Farm land and running these on through the adjacent Starr Playground/Park land
- Integration of the Bridgewater Correctional Complex holdings protected under Article 97 with Ch.61A riverside holdings and scattered town holdings (e.g. Highway Dept. and Water Dept. lands) to create a maximum system of streamside protected holdings

2. Recreation Needs

Approaches

There is no easy way to measure the need for recreation facilities. The following explores use of published standards and then reviews the needs reported or observed by the Recreation Commission and staff and by the Open Space Committee and its consultant.

The state has quantitative guidelines suggesting the number of acres of a particular facility type needed for a given population. These are found in past Statewide Conservation Outdoor Recreation Plans (SCORP) and are applied below. However, such standards do not recognize that the demand for a facility or activity reflects many factors including the population's age groups, sex, income, and ethnic traditions; local patterns of interests; and the present opportunities. Also, past standards focusing on facilities for competitive team sports are less helpful in measuring the needs of individual, less formal, activities such as hiking, fishing, swimming, bicycling, gardening, or camping.

Reliance on such published standards alone also could lead to missing unique local opportunities such as:

- Gardening on former farm fields (for which a program is being developed at the Correctional Complex.)
- Hiking, sledding or skiing over a properly-shaped capped landfill
- Canoeing on local streams
- Motorized sports like dirt bike riding in an old sand pit.
- Rock climbing in an inactive quarry
- Horseback riding over dedicated or multi-purpose trails

The following is a list of traditional public recreation facility definitions and standards from the SCORP.

- **Tot Lots** One half-acre for each 1000 persons in densely-populated neighborhoods. The population served would live within one-quarter mile. Facilities should include swings, slides and other equipment for five year olds.

(Ideally they would also have facilities or activities for accompanying adults, e.g., sitting areas, tables and benches, and/or exercise circuits.) In a low-density town like Bridgewater, smaller numbers would need to be served by each lot to get a good distribution town-wide.

- **Playgrounds:** Playgrounds serve as outdoor games centers for particular neighborhoods. Facilities should include play devices, running areas, swings and benches. Larger playgrounds should include an area for tot lot activities. Some standards require a 5-acre minimum size. SCORP standards require one acre per 250 children of elementary school age in densely populated neighborhoods, and a service area radius of one-quarter mile.

Comment: The need for playgrounds and tot lots may seem to be less in low-density, relatively affluent communities where many families have large yards, but these facilities can encourage more interaction among children and parents than is available in isolated private yards.

- **Neighborhood Park:** A neighborhood park is similar to a community park, but serves a smaller geographic area. The purpose of this type of park is to provide water, forest, or landscaped settings as an aesthetic release from development. Past standards for a neighborhood parks are one-half acre serving a one-quarter to one-half mile radius. This need may be less when individual house lots are large, but there still could be value to a larger, shared gathering place.

*

- **Community Parks:** These serve the entire community and provide a large contiguous open space area for town residents. Some standards call for 20 or more acres for a community park.
- **Playfields:** Playfields are a community's center for outdoor sports competition for all ages, but especially for teenagers and adults. They can be all-purpose (available for both spontaneous and organized activities) or specialized, i.e., designed specifically for use as baseball, football or soccer fields to meet dimensional standards. Past SCORP guidelines called for 3 acres per 1,000 residents, with a minimum size of 10 acres. Playfields also require a parking area with adequate number of parking spaces. These needs are partially met at the Legion Field and Scotland Field

Regional Demands or Needs

These are suggested by the present use of facilities in Southeastern Massachusetts. An extract from the discussion in the SCORP plan, Massachusetts Outdoors 2000!, follows:

Demand in the Southeastern Region

Activities

By a wide margin, the three most popular individual activities in the Southeastern Region are close in percentages: swimming at 60.1%, sightseeing, tours and events at 57.3% and walking at 57.1%. In fact, the sightseeing, tours, and events category received its highest level of interest statewide in this region. Well below that level of participation, substantial numbers also enjoy playground activities (37.9%), fishing (34.2%), and hiking (32.6%). Nearly one quarter of the population of this region has experience during the year with golfing (24%), and watching wildlife and nature study (23.7%). Lesser, but still significant, numbers (10-20%) also experience picnicking, sunbathing, biking (both types), skiing (downhill), non-motorized boating (motor boating is just under 10%), and canoeing.

When grouped by type of activity, the water-based activities predominate, but as in other regions, there is strong participation in some dimension of each type. A rough rank order would be water-based, passive, trail-based, field-based, and wilderness activities.

While no one community can be expected to meet all the regional needs or desires, this extract does suggest meeting desires such as swimming, hiking and biking that can be done locally, while continuing to provide for field sports and other organized activities.

Local Needs

Calculated Needs

Past published SCORP standards suggest the following present and future needs:

Item/ Standards	Population	Supply	Calculated Total Need/ Remaining Need
Playgrounds			
One acre Per 250 Elem Age. Children	2000 population 0-14 years old - 4860	Table V-2 shows six broadly- defined playgrounds totaling about 10 acres in actual use (Starr Playground is woods as is most of J. Leonard Playground.)	19.4 acres/ 9.4 acres
Tot Lots			
Half an acre per 1000 pop, preferably w/i ¼ mile	Total town. year 2000 pop. is 25,185	None unless small playgrounds count	25 lots on 12.6 acres/ 25 lots on 12.6 acres
Community Park			
One @ 20+ acres		None as such but Legion Field, the Golf Course and riverside parklands meet many of these needs but without one major gathering place	One Major Community Park / One such park
Playfields			
Three acres / 1000 pop. Some at 10 acres each	Total town. year 2000 pop. is 25,185	Town has an est. 49.2 acres including planned Hogg fields	On a population basis town needs 75.6 acres/ 26.4 acres more
Tennis Courts			
None Known		Town has eight at old high school	Unknown

Since these standards were designed for dense neighborhoods with small yards little informal open space (and since they omit other interests such as skate boarding), and since present areas are imprecise, they may greatly overstate some needs, while missing other, more current, needs/possibilities, hence they only suggest Bridgewater's needs.

Observed Recreation Needs

The Recreation Commission and staff, project staff and other observers suggest the following needs/opportunities. These reflect the town's Goals, the data and analyses above, and the observations, insights and concerns of the study participants.

Walkways, Bikeways and Trails

- Walking opportunities including a “rough-hewn” Town River walkway for walkers and joggers, with some degree of accessibility.
- Walking, hiking, and riding trails. They would serve segments of the community not involved in organized sports and be developed according to the terrain to meet/challenge varying levels of fitness. Some portions would be part of a useful network of bike paths connecting neighborhoods and common destinations like downtown and the college. Others might also function as bridle paths.
- An expanded recreational and functional town-wide pedestrian and bicycle path system connecting neighborhoods and varied destinations, possibly including segments of the trails noted above.
- Completed walkways around all or the north side of Carver's Pond to Bedford St. with land acquisitions, easements or boardwalks where needed as per the Management Plan

Water Sports

- Places to pull out canoes and kayaks to give paddlers access to all protected riverside holdings. These need not be auto-accessible launching areas
- An indoor or outdoor pool to give the summer swimming program more pool time and to expand the free public swimming time through August. This is needed since the contract for the BSC pool is now limited to six weeks. An indoor pool would allow cold weather recreational swimming and lessons including those needed for a Lake Nippenicket boating program. (And swimming in a pool in the summer even though you have ponds, could allow safer more, contained swimming instruction.)
- A developed natural swimming area (like that Stoughton's Ames Long Pond) at Carver's Pond or elsewhere following study of water quality issues
- Canoe, kayak or small sailboat rentals at the Town River Landing, Lake Nippenicket, Carver Pond and/or the Iron Works Park where feasible.
- Provision of a sailing program at Lake Nippenicket including development of a needed dock (possibly off of the state boat ramp) and acquisition of a rescue boat
- Small Boat and fishing docks at Carver's Pond

- Improved canoe/kayak landing areas giving access to tenting areas at the Wyman Meadow, the Titicut Conservation Parkland , or other riverside conservation sites.
- Improvement of the car-accessible canoe/kayak launching areas, if needed, at the Iron Works Park

Playgrounds

- Full-sized playgrounds to replace the one at Legion Field lost to the expansion of the Williams Middle School. This served younger siblings of youth playing at Legion Field.
- Restoration/improvement/expansion of the handsome and imaginative Rainbow's End Playground and Jenny Leonard Park
- The Legion Field play area and the very minimal (One swing set) play area at Scotland Field.
- Dispersed tot-lots with adult benches and tables and/or exercise circuits for accompanying adults. These can offer a valuable break and adult company to parents while giving small children greater contact and variety than found in their own yards.

Field and Court Sports

- A lighted football practice field, separate from the game field. The lights would allow late practices into the late Fall.
- Four football-sized fields to be left open to accommodate any field sport. An international-sized field for the use of adult leagues and other leagues
- Sufficient fields to allow closing one for rehabilitation
- Two centrally located tennis courts with a practice backboard (beyond those at the Old High School) to replace those at Legion Field lost to the skateboard park. This would implement the commitment to replace the courts and allow the Recreation Commission to again sponsor a tennis program.
- Courts for volleyball, particularly since it can be played at various levels thereby accommodating all ages and skills.
- Public indoor sports facilities providing more all-season space for basketball, volleyball and tennis as well as track, soccer, exercise programs and other indoor pursuits beyond the present and proposed private facilities. These would also provide indoor space for summer programs and could accommodate expanded after-school

programs and meet demands for indoor courts without the constraints of school district gym time.

Note: Some of these needs may be somewhat offset by the indoor Bridgewater Sports Complex (The Dome) on Bedford Street and by the much larger Premier Sports Center complex proposed on farmland at the north end of Elm Street. However these are regionally-oriented fee-charging commercial facilities.

- Facilities for older people such as the horseshoe pit and bocce court the Recreation Commission installed at the Senior Center along with walking trails (below)

Winter Sports

- An outdoor skating pond/rink for general skating. Indoor rinks are largely committed to hockey and lessons, and allow little general skating. If located on a pond this could share a support building with a summer swimming site. If done by flooding a level area it could be located in many places near other facilities with the one in West Bridgewater.
- Cross-country ski trails through selected holdings such as Wyman Meadow and the adjacent Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts holdings

Special Facilities

- Replacement of the Skate Board Park in a suitable location

Special Interests /Opportunities

- Community garden space for those whose yards are small, rocky, or dark.
- Badlands for activities like trail bike and ATV riding - possibly on old sand pits
- Expanded local tenting opportunities at the Titicut Conservation Area and possible restoration of past tenting at Carver's Pond
- Expansion of the Titicut Conservation Parkland into adjacent unused Water Department Land and possibly into Middleboro land across in the bend of the River to create a regional facility..

- Improvement of the Titicut tenting sites to reducing impacts on the conservation area as recommended in the Management Plan
- Improved canoe stops giving access to a tenting areas at the Wyman Meadow and to the varied terrain of the Tuckerwood Conservation Area.
- Creation of an interpretive center and at the Iron Works Park, possibly in the old stone Ironworks building
- The addition of the unused downstream town land with industrial ruins reported in the Management Plan to expand trail opportunities, historic interest, and conservation value at the Iron Works Park.
- Acquisition of the privately-owned dam, fish ladder and pond area, and resolution of any access and parking issues at the Iron Works Park.
- Improved access and parking at the Stiles and Hart Conservation Area; connecting the trails to the ponds and other features, and running them between the High Street and Bedford Street entrances.

Special Needs Populations

The Elderly

Bridgewater's elderly population, defined as those 65 and over, grew from 1648 (7.7%) in 1990 to 2168 (8.7%) in 2000. This is still less than the regional figure of 11.36% but continued growth is expected as the oldest Baby Boomers enter their 60s. In addition, developments for those over 55 years old are attracting older persons from other communities. Beyond this, Bridgewater's character as a college town increases its attractiveness as a place to retire, particularly given its rail service to Boston's resources and the seasonal (school year) bus service to the Brockton. For these reasons, the Bridgewater Department of Elder Affairs expects the 2010 Census to find at least 4000 persons over age 65. The Department operates the new Senior Center located behind several other facilities west of Rte. 18/28, a considerable distance south of the town center.

Activities, and interests observed by the Department and related facilities include:

- Card playing and table games whist etc., at the Senior Center
- Wii virtual computer sports at private facilities. This system calculates the results of physical actions like swinging a bat which are shown on a computer screen so that actual exercise is involved. However there is no Wii machine at the Senior Center.

- Swimming at the Bridgewater State College pool and, for its residents, at a private pool at the High Point 55+ development.
- Meals and social gatherings at the Senior Center
- Walking on safe level trails, though unfortunately, the circular trail behind the Senior Center reportedly has a deteriorated rough surface
- Various exercise programs at the East Bridgewater YMCA.
- Bocce at a court at the Senior Center. This is little used since the original users died and the remote site does not encourage casual pick-up games
- Gardening in the BSC greenhouse to prepare plants for the spring. However, there are no community garden plots for people lacking yard except for those being developed at the BCC.
- Shopping at the Campus Plaza with access via the Senior Shuttle

Changes/improvements which are needed or recommended to increase the range of usable facilities and programs include:

- Improvements, grading of the Center's circular trail and of selected other greenways and trails town-wide to create safe walking opportunities near every neighborhood. This would benefit the elderly, the handicapped, and anyone with limited mobility
- Increased opportunities for accessible swimming within the town
- Development of community garden plots particularly, near concentrations of elderly persons in multi-unit low-cost housing like that found in the north end of the community
- Acquisition of a wii machine for the Center
- Extension of Senior Shuttle service to increase access to local programs and resources and to nearby ones such as the East Bridgewater YMCA.
- Addition of shaded tables, sitting areas and low-stress activity opportunities like an exercise circuit or bocce court at existing and future playgrounds and parks

The Handicapped/Disabled

The handicapped or disabled population has a wide range of abilities and needs. Mobility limitations range from slight, to infrequent balance problems, to use of crutches, to use of hand-powered wheelchairs, to reliance on electric wheelchairs. Some people have little

use of their legs but strong upper bodies and can swim once they get into the water or can play basketball from a wheelchair. Other people have varying vision or hearing limitations affecting their use of facilities and programs.

The ADA survey at the end of this report notes the access and use limitations of the present Conservation and Recreation holdings. Such limitations are also a concern at the town's other open space and recreation facilities and a program to remedy these shortcomings should be developed and implemented through a transition plan as soon as resources allow.

This plan assumes that the overall needs of the diverse handicapped population include:

Physical access to facilities in order to:

- Watch sporting events
- Use supportive facilities such as bathrooms, picnic tables, viewing points, and

Modification of facilities and programs to allow:

- Participation in sports and games through reasonable accommodations
- Use of basic facilities where that can be made possible through such accommodations

As noted in the Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook, the required "Programmatic Accessibility" means that programs must be accessible "in their entirety." Not every facility, at every location needs to be completely accessible, but if, for example "swimming, hiking, picnic areas and play equipment...(are offered), some pools, trails, picnic areas and play equipment must be accessible within (the) system."

(This leaves unresolved the question of the use of one-of-a-kind inherently difficult facilities or activities beyond reasonable, affordable accommodation; but most local resources are not so extreme.)

At the same time, facilities that are to be accessible, should be totally accessible, i.e., it is little help to have a ramp to a bathroom if the door then opens the wrong way and blocks use of the toilet and sink. The Disabilities Commission's survey of recreation facilities is sensitive to these concerns.

Improvements that might give diverse handicapped persons access to a cross-section of facilities include:

- Conventional ramps to bathrooms, bleachers, public spaces
- Modification of picnic tables to allow people in wheelchairs to sit close to the table
- Means of entering the water for swimmers, e.g. a ramp or lift into a pool, or provision of large-wheeled wheelchairs that can roll into the water at any beach
- Provision of boardwalk or trail guidance system for the blind (e.g. a rope strung from pole to pole) and a coordinated Braille or audible system identifying significant aromatic plants

- Modification of swings, seesaws etc. to allow use from wheelchair or use by some one lacking balance or upper body strength.
- Modification (grading, smoothing, use of oversized graphics ...) of trails to allow passage by wheel chairs, or confident walking by people with balance or vision problems

These suggestions of means and approaches supplement those noted or implied in the ADA surveys of Conservation and Recreation facilities. Further study in cooperation with the Disabilities Commission, the Department of Elder Affairs, and related bodies will be needed during development of a future Transition Plan

Environmental Justice Population

The size and location of the Environmental Justice Population have been discussed in Chapter III and the existing and proposed resources serving the population have been reviewed under Environmental Justice/Environmental Equity in Chapter IV.

C. Management Needs

- Reconciliation of ownership of sites needing protection, particularly by putting the appropriate parcels of municipal land under the Conservation Commission
- Close work with the Parkland Stewardship Council to continue its efforts and to assist in planning and managing the Self-Help assisted acquisitions totaling of 157 acres along the Town and Taunton River Greenways and other sites.
- Exploration of ways to maintain and manage the Conservation Parkland System including defining and incorporating the roles of the non-profit Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB) and the Parklands Stewards in Park and Open Space maintenance and management, and considering reorganizing / creating a Conservation Park System Department
- Continuation of the joint West Bridgewater-Bridgewater Town River Fisheries Committee's work for restoration, protection and management of the herring fishery, and consideration of fish ladder improvements or construction where needed on the rivers, and on South Brook en route to Skeeter Mill Pond and possibly to Carver's Pond.
- Building on the recommendations of the 2005 Taunton River Stewardship Plan / Wild and Scenic River Study and on the related Town River Survey report.
- Capitalizing on the Taunton's recent Federal Designation as a Wild and Scenic River.
- Systematic monitoring of the status of Ch. 61, 61A and 61B lands

- Encouragement of selective use of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions
- Drawing on this plan's recommendations to set priorities for CPA-funded acquisitions
- Cooperation with the Division of Fish and Wildlife, The Wild lands Trust of SE Massachusetts, and The Nature Conservancy to manage, protect and use Lake Nippenicket for diverse wildlife protection, conservation, and recreation purposes.
- Inclusion of the six professionally prepared Conservation Parkland Management Plans given to the town by the NRTB in this plan and in future plans by reference, and summarizing the key findings for implementation through CPA funds, State/Federal funds and other resources.

VIII Community Goals and Objectives

Bridgewater's Major Goals and Related Objectives

A. Agriculture Related

Goal 1A. To preserve and cultivate public and private agricultural lands using tools such as Conservation Restrictions, appropriate zoning of present farmland, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, Community Preservation Act funds, along with other state resources such as the Farm Viability and Environmental Enhancement programs

Objective - Protection of productive land through acquisition of development rights via local or non-profit acquisition of Conservation Restrictions or state acquisition of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs); or if feasible, acquisition in fee simple; or through State programs supporting investment in continuing farm operations

Objective - Creation of an Agricultural Commission to pursue programs such as:

- Restoring production at major resources such any available Cumberland Farms land or BCC land
- Putting unused public land acquired for other purposes, e.g., land on North Street west of the new high school, to interim productive use by leasing it to a farmer or allowing community gardens
- Working with supportive local, state, and federal agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Farm Planning staff to create a corn growers/sellers cooperative.

Objective - Review of the zoning of present or recent farmland (working with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, or other informed parties) leading to revisions to protect such land and existing neighborhoods while accommodating well-located commerce and industry

Objective - Passage of a right-to-farm bylaw

1B. Identification of potential community garden sites

Objective - Establishment and expansions of such programs - being initiated by the State College and the Department of Corrections on part of the Old State Farm

B. Open Space, Landscape, and Townscape Related

Goal 2A. To support the efforts of the Conservation and Recreation Commissions to maintain the beauty of Bridgewater and its landscape, to provide varied recreational opportunities for all, and to increase general environmental awareness, and awareness/protection of the town's cultural and natural history

Objective: Acquisition/ protection of scenic Ch. 61A open fields for continued farming unless saved under local TDR provisions or conservation restrictions

Objectives- See scenic, historic and environmental objectives

Objectives - See recreation objectives

Objective - Development of public/private partnerships with civic groups, non-profit organizations, Bridgewater State College, and municipal bodies to enhance, protect and promote the environmental resources within the Linked Town Park System

Objective - Acquisition of all or part of key riverside Ch. 61A properties

Objective - Consideration and enactment of an expanded or added historic district.

Objective - Creation of interpretive centers at sites such as the Iron Works Park, the Stiles and Hart brick making site, or the Titicut shipbuilding site.

Objective – Increased state acquisition of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions over qualifying farms particularly along North St. and Pleasant Street

Objective - Identification and designation of Scenic Roads under MGL Ch.40 S.15 so that roadway projects may not cut or remove trees and tear down stonewalls or portions within public projects only following a Planning Board hearing.

Objective - Exploration of possible scenic easements or conservation restrictions to protect key views like that south of Crescent Street

Objective - Exploration of zoning and site plan review guidelines to protect views of scenic backland from obstructive siting of buildings along major roads.

Objective: Acquisition/protection of open fields on Taunton River with frontage within potential streamside walking distance of proposed expanded Titicut Conservation Area

Objective – Support efforts to plan for upgrade maintenance of town properties, particularly the historic Town Hall and the Academy building.

Goal 2B. To create a town-wide linked open space system or net work which in turn could be connected, if feasible, to open space provided next to or near every neighborhood

Objective - Establishment of a greenway along Bridgewater's portions of the Matfield, Town, and Taunton Rivers as part of a joint effort with all riverside towns

Objective - Objective - Linking major pathways between resources, e.g., through:

- Connecting the Stiles and Hart Conservation area and the downtown landscape
- Expansion of the State Forest north along both sides of South Brook to where it crosses Water Street, and east to Walnut Street, and to Ch. 61A land to the southwest
- Development of a streamside trail along South Brook from Water St. to the town's riverside holdings east of Hayward and Whitman Streets.
- Acquisition of selected private lands around the north end of Carver's Pond through Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds or other resources
- Acquisition/protection of all or parts of riverside Ch. 61A properties possibly through fee-simple purchase or conservation restrictions in cooperation with groups such as the Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, the Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater, or the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts
- Development of a sidewalk and trail from the Starr and Hogg lands via local streets to Carver's Pond via the frontage on Bedford St., through other sidewalked neighborhoods to the BSC campus, on to Town River Landing and then to the Stiles and Hart Conservation Area by the proposed footbridge.
- Acquisition of Ch. 61A of wooded wetlands between Hanson Farm and Forest Drive/Ledgewood Drive to give access to potential trails north to the extensive Ch. 61B swamp lands and state-owned Hockomock Swamp land on the W. Bridgewater line.
- Using CPA funds or other resources to make minor acquisitions filling gaps in town holdings or offering significant recreation opportunities.
- Acquisition of land from the town-owned Emerald Lane to the northwestern corner of Sturtevant's Pond to allow a trail from just south of the Vernon land to the pond and on by a short walk along Vernon Street or Green Street to the Titicut Conservation Area

Objective - Acquisition of key Ch. 61, parcels or other holdings near existing and prospective development to provide open space for present and future neighborhoods, by various means, e.g.:

- Transfer of scattered, accessible town-owned parcels to the Conservation Commission to provide permanently protected local open space
- Town acquisition of the State Forest for Conservation management if the State is not interested in expanding it
- Acquisition of small open fields southeast of Carver's Pond for vista, continued agriculture, grasslands habitat and neighborhood open space
- Acquisition/protection of wooded wetlands surrounded by housing on three sides north of Forest Street to provide permanent neighborhood open space.

Objective: To find opportunities to connect present public and non-profit cluster holdings to nearby public open spaces

Objective: To revise the present zoning provisions and guidelines to encourage integrated open spaces

Objective: Adoption of a set of priorities to guide the Town in using tax title land and in responding to Ch. 61, properties offered to the Town.

Objective: Acquisition of Ch. 61 land on south bank of Town River at West Bridgewater in cooperation with the West Bridgewater Open Space Committee and develop a streamside trail to the Iron Works Park if found to be feasible.

Goal 2C. To enhance and expand the river-oriented Conservation Park Land System

Objective - Acquisition of river access at many key points, for example through:

- Creation of passable trails at and through the major parklands and at the DPW and WTSEM holdings
- Expansion of the Titicut Conservation Area to potentially include adjacent Bridgewater Water Department land and possibly Middleboro land on the opposite bank of the river.

Objective - Increased access to and along major tributaries, for example by

- Creating a trail along South Brook from the State Forest to the Town River

- Creation of access points to all public and non-profit riverside properties e.g., through a clear trail around the Highway Department's riverside sand pit and on to the river.
- Creation of a passable walk to the river and an oxbow from a steep town-owned lot on Plymouth St.
- Construction of the pedestrian bridge proposed between the Town River Landing and the Stiles and Hart Conservation Area, with shovel ready design plans and permits provided by the NRTB
- Integration of major town riverside holdings such as the Highway Department sand pit at the Halifax line and the Water Department's unused land next to the Titicut Conservation Area with the protected open space system



The Taunton River Bend at Titicut; Top left-View east with Water Dept. land to left; Top right-view south downstream with Middleboro land to left; Bottom - Canoers rounding the bend



Objective - Increased protection of a Riverside greenway on the Old State Farm's riverside land

Objective - Protection of a swath of streamside open fields and woodland on 61A land in accord with the Ch.61A survey through acquisition in fee or conservation restrictions and related actions:

- Protection of backlands at the junction of the Town and Matfield Rivers next to/ behind an electric substation, and creation of pedestrian access possibly through a boardwalk
- Acquisition of Town River Ch. 61A land at West Bridgewater line; exploration of a streamside trail to the Iron Works Park
- Acquisition / protection of Ch.61A open fields on Taunton River with frontage on Green Street

Goal 2D. To increase public awareness of existing open space and recreation areas, through varied media; signs, maps, and newspaper and web page features.

Objective - Reoriented and improved signs where needed at major public and non-profit holdings

Objective - Production and distribution of a clear, parcel-based map showing and describing all public and non-profit holdings and the activities possible at them

Objective - Addition of short segments on all major sites to the town web page and/or cable TV along with the map proposed above

Objective - Promotion of major conservation properties, possibly with an interpretative display at Lake Nippenicket done in collaboration with the main owners, the town, the Commonwealth, the Nature Conservancy, and the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts; and elsewhere such as at the Iron Works Park

C. Water Related

Goal 3A To protect environmentally sensitive areas, including the quality and capacity of the public water supply and preservation of riparian land along streams, lakes, and ponds, and to enhance and protect wildlife corridors

Objective – Protection/improvement of the riparian areas of the Matfield, Taunton, and Town Rivers by updating the Town and Matfield Rivers Stream Survey and extending it to the other rivers

Objective - Evaluation of any hydraulic connection between Carver's Pond and the nearby town wells which could limit recreational use of the pond.

Objective - Identification of any water quality impacts on the Matfield or Taunton Rivers of upstream wastewater treatment plants and participation in the ongoing Upper Taunton Basin Wastewater Evaluation Study

Objective - Review of mapped Zone II areas (and soil maps for prospective wells) to set higher priorities for acquisition

Goal 3B. To support Low Impact Design (LID) strategies reducing runoff and maximizing ground water recharge, to consider recharge value when prioritizing open space acquisitions, and to implement flood control strategies such as augmenting flood storage areas, and actively managing dams and control structures

Objective - Use of rain gardens and other LID techniques for paved areas attached to new athletic facilities and open spaces

Objective - Incorporation of LID principles in applicable Town regulations

Objective - Identification of impoundments/control structures with the potential to be managed for active flood control to ease problems discussed in Ch. IV under Environmental Problems (p.IV-35); and development of such management programs

Objective - Identification of lowlands and impoundments with potential for augmented flood storage/recharge preferably combined with protection of habitat and provision of local open space, and implementation of such possibilities

D. Smart Growth Related

Goal 4A. To encourage future town growth and development to follow Smart Growth Principles by incorporating them in the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, Zoning Bylaw, Board of Health Regulations and related regulatory board guidelines and policies, and through use of new tools such as Transferable Development Rights

Objective - Review and modification of existing provisions related to density patterns, open space preservation and environmental protection in cooperation with the regulatory bodies and in consideration of the Master Plan Recommendations

Objective - Exploration of Revision of the Subdivision Rules and Regulations to encourage bicycle/pedestrian easements and paths to adjacent property, located so as to tie into an adopted binding town-wide bicycle/pedestrian system

Objective - To review traffic patterns for ease of movement, safety and neighborhood interconnectedness.

Objective - Design/adoption of a binding town-wide bicycle/pedestrian system guiding local segments, to be required under the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, and other activities to facilitate bicycling.

Objective - Participation in the review of Chapter 40R Smart growth projects to integrate/coordinate the required open space with the Town's open space system

Objective -To use new tools such as Transferable Development Rights - now allowed and used in the Bedford Street Overlay Zoning District.

E. Habitat Related

Goal 5A To protect varied upland and aquatic wildlife, particularly increasing the fisheries productivity of water bodies, protecting vernal pools, and enhancing/protecting wildlife corridors

Objective - Restoration of local herring fisheries through actions such as:

- Addition of fish ladders and modification of culverts and control structures, on South Brook from Skeeter Mill Pond (Flynn's Pond) to Carver's Pond, if feasible and productive
- Improvement of water quality of the Matfield and (East Bridgewater's) Satucket River portions of the fishery
- Repair/maintenance of key public and private fish ladders as needed.

Objective – Continued field examination and certification of all Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP) mapped potential vernal pools and of any previously unidentified vernal pools

Objective - Continued protection of the extensive wooded swamp north of Pleasant St. and cooperative development of trails. This is BioMap land crucial for wildlife diversity. It includes the northern and western portions are in the Hockomock Wildlife Management Area; and the 263.3-acre southern portion under Ch. 61B contains upland forest which the Ch.61A Inventory team found to be a "beautiful wooded area."

Goal 5B. To enhance/protect wildlife corridors through creation of a linked town-wide open space system.

Objective- Identification of gaps in wildlife corridors and of means of filling them such as:

- Acquisition/ restriction, re-routing, or other means of protecting wildlife corridors and/or closing gaps in them
- Protective acquisition of land in NHESP Priority or Estimated Habitat areas or in the BioMap Core habitats
- Maintain a wooded corridor from Carver's Pond to the old Winter Street dump, and into the Old State Farm protected lands near by the old Flagg St. wells
- Acquisition of woodland parcels west of Aldrich Street to make a wildlife corridor to the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area

F. Recreation Related

Goal 6A To provide varied opportunities for organized and casual, sports-oriented and nature-oriented, upland and water-based outdoor recreation

Objective - Balanced recreation and conservation uses of the former Hogg's Farm by completing the playfields on the northern upland and creating a trail to the Starr Playground woodlands to the north.

Objective - Restoration of Jenny Leonard Park and improved accessibility via the sloping driveway and level paths between facilities

Objective - Creation of suitable, acceptable areas for riding ATVs, trail bikes and horses

Objective - Resolution/implementation of the use of the endowed Toole Park land on Pleasant St. (Route 104.)

Objective - Increased opportunities for outdoor swimming

Objective - Increased capacity for pond-side swimming lessons by installing a protective U-shaped float system where needed.

Objective - Creation of sailing/kayaking/canoeing programs at Lake Nippenicket

Objective - Addition of a small boat borrowing or rental program at Lake Nippenicket or Carver's Pond.

Objective - Identification of any need to permanently protect publicly-used private land at Skeeter Mill Pond ("Flynn's Pond")

Objective - Improvement of accessibility at any sites and facilities noted in the ADA self-evaluation section

Objective: Replacement of the tennis courts removed from Legion Field, possibly at Crescent Street (Hogg's Farm.)

Objective - Exploration of cooperative park development at Lake Nippenicket with the State, and with The Nature Conservancy and the Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts, given their newly acquired land.

Objective - Development of 60 + acres of Ch.61A woods, sand pits and open water west of Bedford St. for swimming, skating and picnicking

Goal 6B. To expand opportunities for passive and active recreation via facility improvements, greenway connections, and a town-wide/regionally-linked recreational /functional bicycle and pedestrian trail system building on previous proposals

Objective - Acquisition of property / easements through Ch. 61A land and private parcels to the south to complete a corridor from the Toole Park to the Olde Scotland Links.

Objective - Creation of a trail from just south of the Vernon land east of the golf course to possibly expanded town holdings on Sturtevant's Pond via the town-owned Emerald Lane and intervening land along Snow's Brook

Objective - Review of the usefulness of previously proposed and partially implemented systems, and design and adoption of a town-wide recreational /functional bicycle and pedestrian system including:.

Objective- Examination and development of the previously proposed Pleasant St. to Forest St. cross-country bike path

Objective - Design and implementation of trails easing access to schools through the (elementary and middle school-oriented) Safe Routes to School program or other resources

Objective - Design and implementation of a State Recreational Trails-funded trail east and west of the State Forest and along South Brook to Hayward and Whitman Streets, then along local streets and possible easements to the Tuckerwood Conservation Parkland and potentially on to the High Street Water Department lands.

Goal 6C. To organize, expand and adequately fund professional and volunteer maintenance and improvement of Bridgewater's Parklands System

Objective: Creation of a unified Park and Recreation Department and an adequately staffed Conservation Commission to maintain their respective lands



The Nip - Inviting boaters (watched over by the Old Man of the Lake) Photo by Joseph Pitta

Objective: Creation of an adequately funded staff and volunteer body, drawing on the Parklands Stewards, to manage, maintain and improve town's Parklands and Conservation lands

G. Open Space Committee /Implementation Related

Goal 7A Creation of a standing committee to make this Plan be a living document to be used, and to evolve with changing needs, opportunities, and concerns

Objective - Continuation of the Open Space Committee as a permanent Open Space Committee to complement the Conservation Commission and Master Plan Implementation Committee in implementing (and later updating) this plan and in developing proposals for CPA funding and other resources.



Two approaches to hiking; above, walking along a Tuckerwood trail and below, bushwacking through a powerline easement. Photos by Mrs. Anne Swarce.



IX Five Year Action Program Based on Preceding Goals and Objectives

Year 2009

Revised 2/2010

Studies

	Responsible Party/Funds
S-1. Design the proposed Pedestrian Bridge to the Stiles and Hart Conservation Area from the Town River Landing Goal 2C	NRTB, Cons/ CPC, FH
S-2. Identify and rank Ch. 61, 61A and 61B parcels for recommendation to Community Preservation Committee for potential acquisition if offered or through town initiatives. Goals 2A, 2B	OSC/ Volunteers

Actions

A-1. Make the Open Space Committee a permanent standing committee Goal 7A	BS/ Volunteers
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------

Year 2010

Studies

S-1. Define a potential greenway system along Bridgewater's portions of the Town River and Taunton River as part of a joint effort with West Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Middleboro, and Raynham. Goal 2C	OSC,CC/ CPC
S-2. Study the possible acquisition of selected private lands around the north end of Carver's Pond to complete the proposed trail system and protect shoreline, and determine the feasible configuration of such acquisitions Goals 2A,2B	OSC, CC, RC/ Volunteers.
S-3. Identify upstream wastewater treatment plant discharges and other activities affecting water quality and flows in the Matfield, Satucket, and Taunton Rivers, and participate in the ongoing Upper Taunton Basin Wastewater Evaluation study aimed at improving such conditions. Goals 3A,5A	BOH, Consultant/ BOH,DEP

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| S-4. Work with the Planning Board to study the effects of present zoning on agricultural preservation and the protection of key landscapes
Goals 1A,4A | OSC, PB/
Volunteers |
| S-5. Participate in the review of the Ch. 40R residential project on Plymouth St. for opportunities to integrate the required preserved open space with adjacent town holdings at the Town River Landing and along the Town River at Hayward and Whitman Street
Goals 2C, 4A , | CC, ZBA.PB/
Volunteers/CPC |
| S-6 Examine possible future uses of the Cumberland Farms land between Curve Street and the Taunton River. Identify alternate strategies and resources (CPC, APR, Mixed Development...) to preserve a maximum of the site's agricultural and streamside open space values. Develop an action plan for a subsequent year. Goals 1A, 2A | OSC,CC,PB, and
(future)AG/
CPC, DAR (APR) |
| S-7 . Examine options for creating a Parks and Recreation Department including expanding the role of the Parkland
Goal 6C | BS, Stewards, OSC/
Volunteers, Stewards |

Actions

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A-1. Improve, unify signage at the Tuckerwood, Wyman Meadow, and Wildlands Trust sites and all other Parklands Goals 2A,2D | NRTB,ST
FH,WTSEM/
CPC,WTSEM |
| A-2. Produce and distribute mapped descriptions of all sites
Goals 2A, 2D | OCS,CC,RC/
CPC |
| A-3. Add descriptive material to the town web page Goals 2A, 2D | RC,NRTB
OCS,CC/
RC, NRTB |
| A-4. Restore Jenny Leonard Park and improved accessibility via the sloping driveway and level paths between facilities Goals 6A, 2B | RC,BS/
CPC, DCS |
| A-5. Acquisition of development rights on selected properties through negotiation apart from Ch. 61 offerings Goals 1A, 2A, 2B | CC, AC/
CPC, DCS |

Year 2011

Studies

- S-1.** Identification and ranking of key holdings near or behind existing and prospective development for acquisition to provide nearby open space for present and future neighborhoods Goal 2A, 2B OSC, CC, RC/
Volunteers
- S-2.** Design town-wide recreational /functional bicycle and pedestrian system with connections to adjacent communities Goals 2B, 6B PB, RC,FH/
Volunteers,
- S-3.** Study possible acquisition of land/CRs on a swath of riverside farmland and woodland from the Halifax line to west of Bedford St. for open space and leased farm use, draw on Ch .61 inventory/analysis Goals 1A, 2C OSC,CC,AC
NRTB,WTSEM/
Volunteers

Actions

- A-1.** Begin acquisitions establishing a greenway along Bridgewater's portions of the Town River and Taunton River as part of a joint effort with West Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Middleboro, and Raynham. Goals 2A, 2C CC, WTSEM/
CPC
- A-2.** Add neighboring Bridgewater Water Department land to the Titicut Conservation Area Goals 2A, 2C, 6C CC, WC, BS./
Volunteers
- A-3.** Add capacity for swimming lessons by installing a U-shaped float system where lessons are feasible Goal 6A RC/
DCS
- A-4** Build Town River Landing Pedestrian Bridge Goal 2C BS, Consultant./
CPC, FH
- A-5.** Acquire selected private lands around north end of Carver's Pond to complete proposed trail system and protect the shoreline and a potential Zone II area Goals 2B, 3A CC, WC/
CPC,WC
- A-6.** Revision of the Subdivision Rules and Regulations to require bicycle/pedestrian easements and paths to adjacent property, located so as to tie into a binding adopted town-wide bicycle/pedestrian system Goals 4A, 6B PB/
Volunteers
- A-7.** With Planning Board, propose Town Meeting articles to modify any zoning negatively affecting agricultural preservation and the protection of key landscapes Goals 1A,4A OSC,PB/
Volunteers



Carver's Pond

Photo by Leslie Dorr

Year 2012

Studies

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <p>S-1. Study potential addition of Middleboro land along Vernon St. across the Taunton River to an expanded multi-town Bridgewater/Raynham /Middleboro Titicut Conservation Area</p> | <p>Goals 2A, 2C</p> | <p>OSC, CC, towns/
CPC, DCS</p> |
| <p>S-2. Study possible acquisition of land from the town-owned Emerald Lane to the northwestern corner of Sturdevant's Pond to allow a trail from just south of the Vernon Land to the Pond and on by a short walk along Vernon Street or Green Street to the Titicut Conservation Area</p> | <p>Goals 2A,2B</p> | <p>OSC, CC, RC/
Volunteers</p> |
| <p>S-3. Study acquisition of Ch. 61A " beautiful green fields" on the Taunton River near proposed expanded Titicut Conservation Area</p> | | <p>OSC,CC,NRTB/
CPC, DCS</p> |

Actions

- A-1.** Encourage State expansion of State Forest north along both sides of South Brook to where it crosses Water Street, and east to Walnut Street, or seek transfer to the town for Conservation Commission management OSC,CC/
Volunteers
Goals 2A,2B
- A-2.** Develop a streamside trail along South Brook from Water St. to the town's riverside holdings east of Hayward and Whitman Streets or a greater trail from Walnut St. through the State Forest and along South Brook to Hayward and Whitman Streets and along local streets and possible easements to the Tuckerwood Conservation Park land then potentially to the High Street Water Department lands. RC,CC, Stewards/
CPC,DCS,DCR
Goals 2B, 2C, 6A
- A-3.** Begin acquisition of a riverside swath of open land on Ch. 61A streamside open fields and other agricultural lands for open space and leased agricultural use, including town-initiated purchases CC, AC/
CPC,DCS,APR
Goals 1A, 2B,
- A-4.** Begin signing bike routes, marking separate lanes where feasible and building separate off-road paths consistent with other plans HF Dept.,/
DCS,CPC
Goal 6B

Year 2013

Studies

- S-1.** Examine possible State (Department of Conservation and Recreation) expansion of the State Forest or town acquisition of it for management by the Conservation Commission. Goals 2A, 2B, OSC, CC/
Volunteers
- S-2.** Study designation of Scenic Roads recommended in past reports, check past Town Meeting Actions. Goal 2A PB,CC/
Volunteers

Actions

A-1. Acquisition of streamside backlands (next to and behind an electric company substation) south of the High Street Water Dept. lands where the Taunton River starts at the junction of the Town and Matfield Rivers and creation of pedestrian access possibly through a boardwalk and/or along the powerline CC/
CPC/DCS
Donation? Goals 2A,2B,2C

A-2. Acquisition of land from town-owned Emerald Lane to northwestern corner of Sturtevant's Pond to allow a trail from just south of the Vernon Land to the pond and on by a short walk along Vernon Street or Green Streets to the Titicut Conservation Area CC/
CPC, DCS
Goals 2A,2B

Year 2014

Studies

S-1. Study development of a streamside trail along South Brook from Water St. to the town's riverside holdings east of Hayward and Whitman Streets or a greater trail from Walnut St. through the State Forest and along South Brook to Hayward and Whitman Streets and along local streets and possible easements to the Tuckerwood Reservation and potentially on to the High Street Water Department lands. OSC, CC, RC/
Volunteers
Goals 2B, 2C, 6A

S-2. Investigate possibility of acquiring streamside backland (next to and behind an electric company substation) at the junction of the Town, Matfield and Taunton Rivers and creating pedestrian access, possibly through a boardwalk and/or along the power line. OSC, CC,
Stewards/
DCS,CPC
Goals 2A,2B,2C

S-3. Work with West Bridgewater Open Space Committee to examine acquisition of Ch. 61 land on south bank of Town River at West Bridgewater and a possible streamside trail to the Iron Works Park. OSC, NRT,
Stewards/
Volunteers
Goal 2B, 2C

S-4. Work with owner to examine means to permanently protect private land at Skeeter Mill Pond ("Flynn's Pond") – only if its future status is uncertain CC, RC/
Volunteers
Goals 2B,6A

S-5. Study feasibility of the Aldrich Street to North Street/Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Corridor, especially the North Street crossing, and modify as needed. CC, NRT, DF&W/
Volunteers and
state staff
Goals 5A,5B

Year 2015

Studies

S-1. Study/organize the addition of a small boat (canoe, kayak or sailboat) lending or rental program at Lake Nippenicket or Carver's Pond. RC/
Volunteers
Goals 6A

S-2. Study the feasibility of acquiring the intervening Ch. 61A land and private parcels to the south to create a corridor from the O'Toole Land north of Rte. 104 to the Olde Scotland Links. CC, OSC/
Volunteers
Goals 2B, 6B

Actions

A-1. Restore/create of sailing/kayaking/canoeing programs at the Lake or Carver's Pond RC/
RC
Goal 6A

A-2. If feasible, acquire the intervening Ch. 61A land and private parcels to complete a corridor partly along the powerline from the O'Toole Land to the Olde Scotland Links. CC,RC/
CPC, DCS
Goals 2B,6B

A-3. Acquire two woodlands parcels west of the Aldrich Street to make a wildlife corridor across North St. to the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area through a small intervening parcel CC,NRT,
WTSEM/
CPC,DCS,
DF&G
Goals 5A,5B

A-4. Submit Scenic Roads designations to Town Meeting PB/
Volunteers
Goal 2A

A-5. Continue the Open Space Committee as a permanent Town Committee to complement the Conservation Commission and Master Plan Implementation Committee in implementing (and later updating) this plan and in developing proposals BS/
Volunteers
implementation

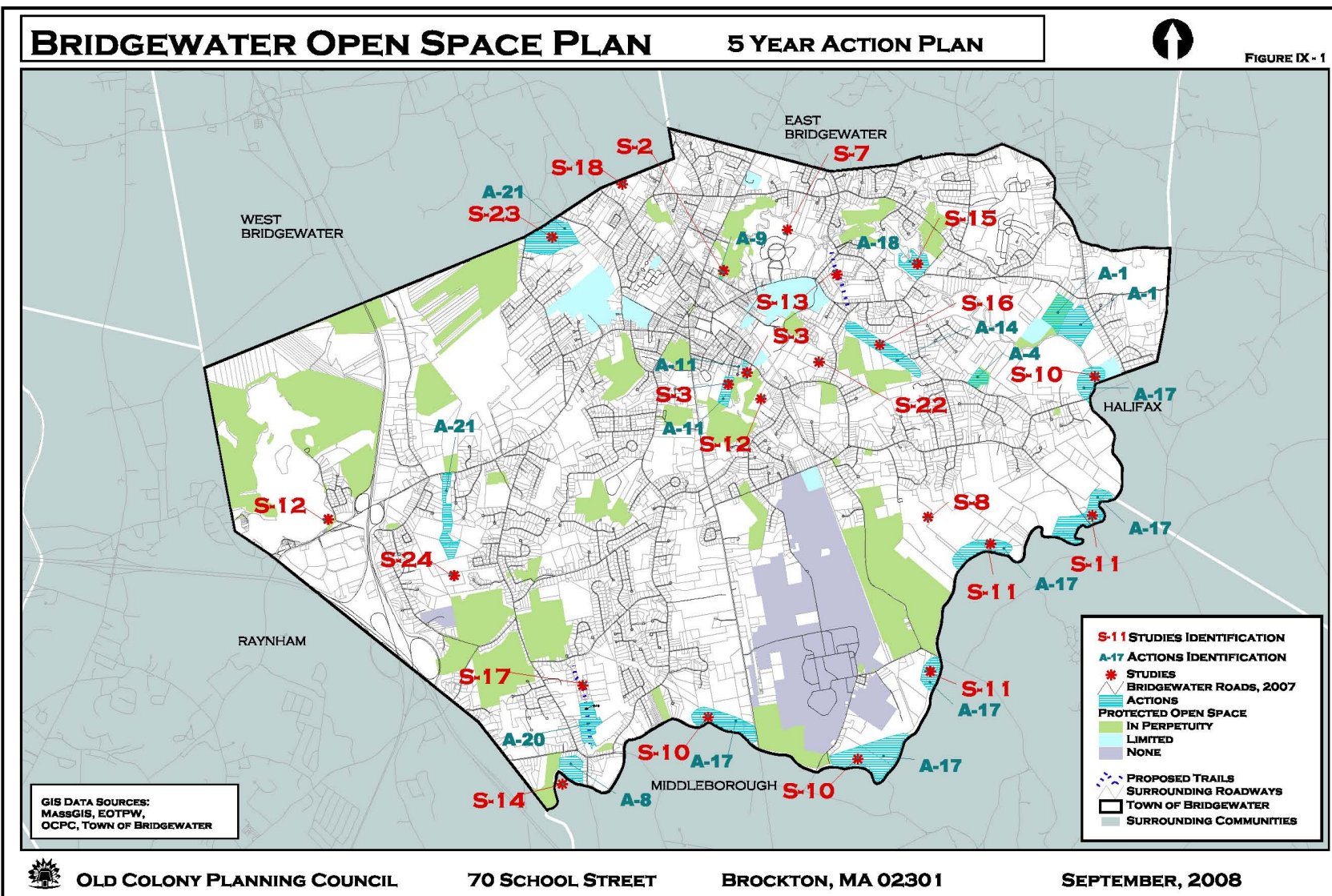
The first listed is the lead agency.

Initials Used:

AG	Agricultural Commission
BOH	Board of Health
BS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
Cons	Consultant
CPC	Community Preservation Committee
DAR	Department of Agricultural Resources
DCR	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation - Source of Recreational Trails Grants
DCS	Division of Conservation Services - Source of LAND (ex Self Help) and PARC (ex Urban Self Help) and related Federal funds. .
DEP	State Department of Environmental Protection
FH	Forestry and Highway Department
MTC	Massachusetts Technology Collaborative - Source of alternative energy funds
NRTB	The Natural Resources Trust of Greater Bridgewater
OSC	Open Space Committee
PB	Planning Board
RC	Recreation Commission
ST	The Parklands Stewards
WTSEM	The Wildlands Trust of SE Massachusetts
ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals



Paddling down the Taunton River; Titicut Conservation Area to starboard; Middleboro's Taylor Farm to port



X Public Comments

XI References

- Plymouth County Soil Survey, US Soil Conservation Service, 1969
- Bridgewater Open Space Plan, November 22, 1977
- Bridgewater Master Plan Update, Old Colony Planning Council, 1984
- Bridgewater Open Space and Recreation Plan, September 1995
- Styles and Hart Conservation Area Management Plan, Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB), 2002
- Massachusetts Outdoors 2000!, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, 2000
- Wyman Meadow Management Plan, Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB), 2002
- Town River Shoreline Survey Report and Action Recommendations, Taunton River Wild and Scenic Study Tributary Component, 2003
- Southeastern Massachusetts Natural Resources Atlas, Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, 2004
- Tuckerwood Conservation Area Draft Management Plan and Handbook, NRTB, Conway School of Landscape Design, and Nature's Refuge Landscape Design, 1999, 2004
- Carver's Pond Management Plan and Handbook, NRTB, Massachusetts Audubon Society, 2004
- Town of Bridgewater Open Space /Recreation Plan Submission to the Division of Conservation Services, January, 2005
- Bridgewater Master Plan, DuFresne-Henry Corp., 2005
- Regional Multi-hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, and Bridgewater Annex, Old Colony Planning Council, 2006
- Office of the Board of Assessors, Bridgewater Town Hall
- Bridgewater Conservation Commission
- Bridgewater Planning Board

Bridgewater Recreation Commission and staff

Ron Adams, Town Clerk, Bridgewater Town Hall

Sharon Anderson, Disabilities Commission

Andrew Bagas, Bridgewater Highway Superintendent

Brooke Condon, Recreation Commission Staff

Kathleen Doherty, President, Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater (NRTB); Founder
Taunton River Watershed Alliance

State Representative David Flynn

Carlton Hunt, Battelle Institute, Duxbury; Master Plan Implementation Committee

Bridgewater Sewer Commission and Department, Jonas V. Kazlauskas, Supt.

Laurie Keene, Conservation Commission Secretary

Stanley Kravitz, Bridgewater Board of Health Agent

Katherine LaGrasta, Chair, Bridgewater Disabilities Commission

Elizabeth Moura, Assistant Director of Elder Affairs

Scott MacFaden, Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts

David Matton, Bridgewater Transportation Management Coordinator

Bridgewater Water Commission and Department, Joseph Silva, Superintendent

Lisa Sullivan, Confidential Secretary to the Board of Selectmen

Table V- 4

**Summary Inventory of
Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest**

Name /Ownership Map /lot	Management/ Area	Use	Condition	Public Access	Access for Disabled See Appendix C ADA Self- Evaluation	Recreation Potential	Zoning	Degree of Protection	Type of Assist- ance	Deed Restriction s
Public Lands										
Town Conservation Lands										
C-1 Stiles and Hart Conservation land 12/44	Conservation Commission 69 acres	Hiking canoeing, fishing habitat	Good, some debris / needs parking	Public, no fee	Limited, access by rough carpath	Considerable, add canoe landing, foot bridge, parking	Res. D	High as Cons. land	Self Help	Unknown
C-2 Tuckerwood Conservation Area 14/21	Conservation Commission 33 acres	Hiking, habitat fishing, boating	Good	Public No fee	Limited rough path could be improved	Considerable, add carry-in boat launching area	Res.-C	High as Cons. land	Self Help	Unknown
C-3 Wyman Meadow 39-3 39-4	Cons. Comm, & Water Dept 35+acres	Hiking habitat fishing canoeing swimming	Good	Public no fees	Driveable, but no easy river access	Considerable possible carry-in launching area or stop	RA/B	High as Cons. & and Water land	Self Help	Unknown
C-4 Iron Works Park 10/40;.11/3	Cons. Comm. 19.7 acres	Hiking, habitat hist. interest fishing canoeing	Fair- good debris	Public, no fees	Poor level, but irregular carpath though site	Considerable possible carry- in launching area or stop	R-D	High as Cons. Land	Self Help	Unknown
C-5 Carver's Pond 63/2;63/18;63;19; 63;20;63;21 49/44;49;27 62/28	Cons. Comm. and Water Dept. 107 acres (Audubon) 70.1 acres from Assessors' Maps	Misc. natural recreation & water supply protection	Good; dam may need work	Public, no fees	No, rough trails though site	Much, boating picnicking, nature study hiking	R-C; R-D at northern edge; B-B at western edge	High as Cons. & Water land	Un- known	Unknown
C-6 Titicut Cons Area 131/8;131/9. 131/10 131/11 27.8 Acres	Cons. Comm?. 27.8 acres	Tenting, canoeing, wildlife study	Good, launching area could be stabilized	Public, no fees	Fair, can be driven into, but steep bank from river	Great, camp ground could use facilities	R- A/B	High as Cons; land. Possible Expansion to adjacent water land	Self Help	Unknown

C-7 Lake Nippenicket Town holdings 82/5;82/7;86/67 83/60;83/37;69/4= 13.65 acres on Lake plus 3/78;83/79; 83/80= 4.13 acres on nearby lots	Cons. Comm. 13.65 acres on Lake; 4.13 acres on nearby lots	Boating, fishing (formerly swimming) hiking nature study	Good; State Boat ramp needs work	Public, no fees	Fair; Boat ramp to water but no facility for entering a boat	Great; Much water sports potential e.g., boating program?	R-A/B	High as Cons. Land next to state land	Unknown	Unknown
C-8 See R-3 Crescent St. Fields										
C-9 Sturdevant's Pond 132/2	Cons. Comm. 3.33 acres	Fishing, skating, canoeing	Good, No facility except retaining Wall on town portion	Public, no fees	Limited, level to wall at edge of pond possibly allowing boat access with help	Moderate	R-A/B	High as Cons. land but town owns only 1/3 of shore	Unknown	Unknown
C-10 Broad St. at E.B line 4/1	Cons. Comm? Master Plan Lists as 1998 Town Meeting Acquisition 2.55 ac.	Wildlife habitat, flood storage	Good, natural wildlands	Public, no fee	Poor, steep edge no access	Minimal	R-D	High if Cons. land	Unknown	Unknown
C-11 Aldrich St . 9/27	Cons. Comm? Listed as 1998 Town Meeting Acquisitions in M. Plan 5.33 ac	Wildlife habitat, hiking, flood storage	Good, Natural wildlands	Public N/A	Poor, walkable cart path barely passable for a chair with help	Minimal	R-C	High if Cons. Land	Tax Title	Unknown
C-12 Old Forge Road Town 20/25	Cons. Comm? Listed as 1998 Town Meeting Acquisition in M. Plan .06 acres	.06 acre of unused ROW between two streets	Good, pocket of woods	Public N/A	N/A Fenced of woods	Minimal	R-D	N/A	Unknown	Unkown
C-13 Plymouth St. Town 25/81	Cons. Comm? 2.60 acres	Habitat, a single wet lot	Good, wet woods	Public N/A	Poor Wooded wetland	Minimal	R-C	High if Cons. Land	Unknown	Unknown
C-14 Dundee Drive	Cons. Comm.? 1998	Habitat, access to other	Unknown	Public N/A	Poor rough ground no path	Limited	R-A/B	High if Cons. Land	Dedication as part of a	Unknown

Town 98/7,31	Town Meeting Acquisition 21.07 acres	land along powerline ROW			or signed entrance				cluster Project or tax title?	
C-15 Cross St. 110/16	Cons. Comm? Listed as 1998 Town Meeting Acquisition. 2.3 acres	Habitat Neighborhood open space	Good, woods	Public, No fee	Poor, irregular ground, no path	Limited, woods for kids to play in	R-A/B	High if Cons. Land	Tax title?	Unknown
C-16 Bob White Lane/ Old Forest St. 99/49,50,51,53, 55,65	Cons. Comm? Listed as 1998 Town Meeting Acquisition 9.92 acres	Habitat, Neighborhood Open space from unused lots	Good	Public, No fee	Fair, Lots along a road	Limited, woods for kids to play in, wetlands	R-A/B	High if Cons. Land	Tax Title?	Unknown
C-17 Cobblestone Lane Town 98/3	Cons. Comm. Donated Open Space Community Project land 21.46 acres	Varied wooded open space including powerline ROW going through adjacent Dundee Dr. land	Good	Public, No fee	Limited, level drainage easement gives access to natural woodland w/o paths; most lots aback onto open space	Moderate woods for kids to play in including powerline ROW ultimately crossing state land at 58/32	R-A/B	High if Cons. Land	Donated cluster land	Unknown
C-18 Laurel St. Land Town 50/5	Cons.Comm.,? (Mapped a protected) 12.25 acres	Habitat, hiking neighborhood backdrop	Good, natural low woods	Public, No fee	Poor level land, no paths	Limited	R-C	High if Cons. land	Tax Title?	
Misc Town Lands for other purposes										
C-11 Toole Park 72/1	Town, Cons Comm?. 9.01 acres	Future park	Fair, unimproved woods	Public, no fee	Poor, undeveloped	Good large lot next to houses	R-A/B	High, as given for a park with \$100,000 endowment	Gift	Unknown
T-2 McEwain School n 20/43	Selectmen 6.42 acres	Bldg. Dept Offices, Minimal Playground, sand box, buried tires and basketball hoop	Poor	Public, no fee	Good, level grounds	Good, potential for modest local tot lot t	R-D	Medium as town property	School Purchase?	Unknown

Highway Department										
HD-1 East St. Sand Pit 60/7	Highway Dept. 18.0 acres	Sand pit, woods & river bank.	Fair, sand pit enroute to river	N.A.	N.A. Difficult access to river	Much potential, fishing, canoeing Hiking, given a safe route around sand pit	R-A/B	Medium as town land	Town Purchase?	Unknown
Water Dept.										
WD-1. Carver's Pond Town Well See C-5	Water Dept. with Cons. Comm. 70.1 acres	Wellfield on south side of site managed with Cons. Comm. See text								
WD-2 Titicut Water land 131/7	Water Dept. 20.22 acres	Unused potential well site along River.	N.A.	Public land, no fee	Unknown	Great, as expansion of adjacent Titicut Cons..Area tenting area if available	R-A/B	Medium as unused town Land	Town Water Bonds?	Unknown
WD-3 Water Tank at BSC 35/ 31,32,33,35	Water Dept. 11.58	Scenic hilltop with water tank	Good	Public, no fee	Limited	Picnicking, enjoying view	R-D	Medium as town land	Town Purchase?	Unknown
WD-4 Matfield River Wells Town 14/ 11,12,17,18	Water Dept. (Only # 11 is listed as Water Dept). 34.03 acres	Wells and protective land	Good	Public, except near Pumping stations. no fee	Poor, irregular land	Much potential on large parcel 17 if protective	R-C; R-A/B	Good as active water supply land	Town Purchase ?	Unknown
Town Recreation Lands		+								
R-1 Legion Field 48/86	Recreation Comm. 23.26 acres (inc. Williams School)	Baseball softball, skateboarding football, soccer, basketball, plus Williams School	Excellent	Public, no fee	Yes, all is level or ramped	Maximized	R-D	High as rec. land except for school site	Gift For sports	2/25/35 Town Meeting accepted land for fields and a playground
R-2 Scotland Field 72/33	Recreation Comm. 6.7 acres	Softball soccer LaCrosse, basketball playground	Good	Public, no fee	Yes., level paths	Maximized	R-A/B	High as Rec. Land	Unknown	Unknown

R-3/ C-8 Crescent St. Fields and Cons. Area Town 47/115	Rec. Comm. 49.9 acres	Field sports, hiking wildlife observation 3 softball fields coming, also playground and trails through cons. areas	Farm Land, not built yet	Public, no fees	Expected, See designs	Considerable when built, southwestern portion to be conservation land	R-A/B	High as Rec. land .	Unknown	Town Meeting vote for Rec./Muni Use.
R-4 Rainbow's End Playground On State land (North Hay Fields) with Soccer fields 88/33 See NPR-1 acres	Rec. Comm.' Est.2.5 acres of 49.63 state acres	Playground activity Climbing, sliding, swinging	Good, but Pressure- treated wood needs /gets periodic sealing	Public, no fees	Yes, level or gentle paths, low swings, slight correctable pathway Obstacles s	Good, could be expanded to adventure playground	R-A/B	Moderate as State land that could go to another use.	Unknown	Unknown
R-5 Jenny Leonard Park 52/11	Reverted to Town Selectmen 10.4 acres	General Playground; swinging, sliding, see-sawing., and basket-ball, roofed bad-weather play area	Fair, attractive grounds but swings and turntable need repair bathroom needs rebuilding, basketball court is overgrown	Public, no fees	No ,challenging steps, driveway could be regraded for easier access	Good, a neglected facility with great charm and potential	R-A/B	High as Rec.	Private Gift	Unknown
R-6 Town River Landing 21/167	Under Selectmen Landing Committee / Rec. Comm./ 2.71 acres	Canoe, kayak launching area	Good, newly built curved ramp	Public, no fees	Ramp allows walking to river's edge, but abrupt drop at edge is awkward	Much, Potential bridge to Stiles and Hart land	CBD	High as a public project depending on use of rest of site	Town DPW Land	Unknown
R-7 Olde Scotland Links 108/1,2; 116/7 ? 218.53 acres	Golf Course Committee	Golf	Good	Public; User fees	Unknown	Much done already	R-A/B	High as recreation park land	Town Bond issue	Unknown
R-8 Chaffee Farm 109/8,12,13,22	Recreation Comm. 60.03 acres	Former farm land used by DPW pending proposed ball fields, picnic areas, trails	Poor, reverting to nature	N.A.	N.A.	Much potential	R-A/B	High as acquired for re-creation	Town Bond issue?	Unkown
R-9 Hayward St. Town River land	Unknown Cons.? Rec.? 5.2 acres	Woods and marsh, habitat canoeing. bird watching	Good Natural land	Public ,no fees	N.A. No	Great potential, on river	R-D	Moderate as town land, higher as wetlands	Tax Title?	Unknown

School Recreation Lands										
RS-1 Mitchell Elm. School School District 62/19	School Dist. 22.17 acres	Three small playgrounds, a ballfield & basketball hoops	Good	Public, No fees	Yes. ?	Some, Facilities could be expanded	R-A/B	Medium as school land	School funds	Unknown
RS-2 Old High School School District 33/47,48	School Dist. 21.012 acres	Various ballfields and courts. See text and Recreation matrix	Good	Public, No fees	Yes ?	Some possible expansion	R-D	Medium as school Land	School fnds	Unknown
RS-3 New High School District 32/8; 33/1,5,6, 79;	School District 93.61 acres	Various fields football, softball, soccer ,track see text	New, good	Public, no fees	Yes	Yes much unused farmland on parcel 32/8. See text/photo	R-A/B	Medium as school land	School Bonds?	Unknown
RS-4 Burnell School BSC 22/45NA	School Dist Manages College- owned - school. Small portion of 51.75 acre- tract	Two small Playgrounds, swings, slides etc. for school and day care	Excellent	For use of school and day care	Good	BSC is taking building back. Playground's future e.g as a local totlot is unknown	R-A/B	Medium, as College land	College funds ?	Unknown
State Recreation /Conservation Land										
Co-1 Lake Nippenicket Many lots See text 178.48 acres on pond -58.14 acres of backland to east	Fish and Wildlife, Public Access Board? 178.48 acres on pond -58.14 acres of backland to east = 236.52 acres	Fishing, boating, wildlife habitat, Shoreline access, Hiking	Good, natural area. State) Boat ramp needs work	Public, No fees	No, Boat ramp to water but no facility for entering a boat	Great; Water sports potential Add trails? Coordinate e programs with Town and non- profits WTSEM and TNC	R-A/B	High as State open space and habitat land	State bonds?	Unknown
Co-3 "Old State Farm" Commonwealth See text	State or BCC 425 acres under Art.97.	Former "State Farm," portions farmed under five- year leases with DOC	Good, mowed fields	Public land, unknown use	N.A.	Potential as- part of river greenway; leased farmland or grasslands	R-A/B	High as under Article 97	Unknown	Unknown

Co-4 BSC Commonwealth Many Parcels See text	State College 496 acres est.	College, recreation, and support space See recreation matrix	Good	Public, but generally limited to college use except pool and tennis courts	Good	Potential expansion but facilities are for college except for some pool and tennis time	R-A/B	Medium as college land	State Bonds?	Unknown
-------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------	---------------------------	-----------------	---------

Non-Profit lands										
Land Trusts										
LT-1 North Fork Preserve WTSEM 39/7	WTSEM 41.2 acres	Hiking, fishing canoeing/ Kayaking Informal tenting	Good, Natural Land	Non- profit, no fee	Limited	Considerable in conjunction with Wyman Meadow	R- A/B	High as land Trust	Trust funds?	To be kept open
LT-2 Lake Nippenicket Peninsula WTSEM/TNC 57/75,76; 70/2, & 57/77- 83 ???	WTSEM/ TNC With TNC holding a conservat ion restrictio n 88 acres	Hiking habitat canoeing swimming nature observation picnicing	Good, little used in past	Non- profit, no fee	Limited sloping grass land and woods	Considerable water, field and forest	R- A/B	High as land trust land	Donation	To be kept open under C.R.
LT-3 Lake Nip Island WTSEM 69/12	WTSEM 12.41acre s (reported as 14 acres.)	Canoeing, swimming, picnicking habitat Tenting	Good, little used	Non- profit, no fee	Very Limited	Considerable l	R- A/B	High as land trust land	Donation	To be kept open
NPR-1 Flagg Street State,BCC Soccer Fields 76/ no parcel #	Bridgewa ter Youth Soccer Mapped area scales to 24 acres	Soccer fields for up to 20 games, informal off season use.Good but irregular surface	Good but irregular surface. Has field House, bleachers movable goals	Non-profit, user fees?	Limited level area	Considerable potential for other use	R- A/B	Moderate, state land	State funds, private operating funds	Unknown
NPR-2 HandiKids Camp 107/5	King Solomon Humanita rian Foundati on 18 acres	Handicapped kids camp	Unknown	Non- profit Fees?	Full	Built out maximized?	R- A/B	unless restricted	Private Funds	Unknown

Appendix A.

Land in Current Use Taxation FY 2009. Lands are those outlined in red on Figure V-1. Recommendations are from the Open Space Committee's Evaluations

1. Map/Parcel ID - 59/9
Ownership - Ouimet
Location - Off Scotland Blvd
Area/Acres - 263.33
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/vegetation - Wooded
Present Use - None
Abutting Uses - Commercial/Light industrial/Residential/Agricultural
Notable Features / Potential Uses - Beautiful wooded area/Walking trails
Recommendations - Protect for extensive walking / nature trails
2. Map/ Parcel ID - 46/126
Ownership - Murray
Location - Off North Street
Area/Acres - 37.0
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Open rolling hay fields/wooded in back
Present Use - Agricultural.
Abutting Uses - Residential and agricultural
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Open field/Vista/ Agricultural
Recommendations - Keep for agriculture
3. Map/ Parcel ID - 46/15
Ownership - Needs
Location - off North/ Street
Area/Acres- 25.22
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Rolling/open fields, wooded
Present Use - Partially agriculture and wooded
Abutting Uses - Residential and agricultural
Notable Features - Potential Uses - Agricultural
Recommendation - Keep agricultural
4. Map/Parcel ID - 60/4
Ownership - Hanson
Location - Off Pleasant Street
Area/Acres -12.48

Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Wooded.
Present Use - Residential
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - House on property, wooded
Recommendations - Keep as single-family residential with no further development

5. Map/ Parcel ID - 12/48

Ownership - Andruk
Location - Off Pleasant Street
Area/Acres- 21.5
Access Overall- Limited
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Wetlands
Present Use - None
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Wetlands
Recommendations - Protected inherently as wetlands

6. Map/ Parcel ID - 72/ 58

Ownership - Ferrari
Location - Off Vernon/Pleasant Streets
Area/Acres - 24.27
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Rolling agricultural
Present Use - Agricultural
Abutting use - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Use - Agricultural Victory garden
Recommendations - Protect for agricultural/victory garden/possible active recreation uses

7. Map/Parcel ID - 117/14

Ownership - Auglis
Location - Off Vernon
Area/Acres - 10.53
Access Overall- Easy
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Sand pit
Present Use - "Storage" facility
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - None/none
Recommendations - Do not keep

8. Map/Parcel ID - 99/77
Ownership - Chaves C/O Flaherty
Location - Off Forest Street
Area/Acres - 49.48
Access Overall - Private
Zoning- R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Unknown
Present Use - Residential
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/ Potential Uses - Unknown
Recommendations - Currently in use as private residential /agricultural property.
Property should be reconsidered at a future date
9. Map/Parcel ID - 86/2, 60,61,72
Ownership - Wood
Location - Off Brookside Drive
Area/Acres -10.72
Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Wetlands/Extensive
Present Use - None
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features - Wetlands
Recommendations - Protected/Wetlands
10. Map/ Parcel ID - 73/22;108/22; 60/10
Ownership - Chaffee (Hanson Farm)
Location - Off Pleasant Street
Area/Acres - 72.58
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Rolling farmland
Present Use - Farming
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Active farm
Recommendations - Keep active farm
11. Map/Parcel ID - 10/73;74/170
Ownership - Flaherty
Location - Main Street
Area/Acres - 17.89
Access Overall - Road frontage but no parking
Zoning - R/D
Terrain/Vegetation - Open field
Present Use - None
Abutting uses - Residential, commercial, light industrial

Notable Features/Potential uses - Scenic vista/walking trails/Town River access.
Recommendations - Protect for multitude of family uses.

12. Map/Parcel ID - 62/13
Ownership - Wood
Location - Off Willow Ridge Drive
Area/Acres -15.73
Access Overall - Very limited/from Elementary School
Zoning - R/C
Terrain/Vegetation Wetland/Flat
Present Use — None
Abutting Uses - Residential/Elementary School
Notable Features - Heavily wooded/ Wetlands
Recommendations - Land is inherently protected as open space because of wetlands
13. Map/Parcel ID - 48/25
Ownership - Wood
Location - Corner of Leonard and Worchester (west of Carver's Pond)
Area/Acres - 14.7
Access - Overall Limited
Zoning - R/D
Terrain/Vegetation - Wetland/Wooded
Present use - None
Abutting uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Wetland
Recommendations - Protected wetland/Potential Zone 2
14. Map/Parcel ID - 61/166,167; 74/6,84
Ownership - Wood
Location - Off South Street/Grange Court
Area/Acres - 6.7
Zoning - R/C
Terrain/Vegetation - n. a. a. .
Present Use - Developed . .
Abutting Uses - n.a.
Notable Features/Potential Uses – n.a.
Recommendations - No longer available as 61A. Land ; has been developed for housing.
15. Map/Parcel ID - 73/23
Ownership - Wood
Location - Forest Drive
Area/Acres - 11.3
Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - R/AB

Terrain/Vegetation - Wetlands/Extensive
Present Use - None
Abutting Uses — Residential/Agriculture
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Wetlands
Recommendations - Protected/Wetlands

16. Map/Parcel ID - 74/10
Ownership - Leach
Location - Off South Street
Area/Acres - 16.91
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Flat open field
Present Use - Haying
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Victory garden/Flowering trees
Recommendation - Protection recommended
17. Map/Parcel ID - 74/39;75/25.26
Ownership - Leach
Location - Off South Street
Area/Acres - 65.78
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/C
Terrain/Vegetation - Wooded/open fields/some wetlands
Present use - Some sections are residential, rest none
Abutting uses - Residential/potential commercial
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Beautiful wooden/open fields
Recommendations - Protect for walking/scenic/agriculture
18. Map/Parcel ID - 88/10,68; 101/2,4,5,37
Ownership - Wood
Location - off Bedford Street
Area/Acres - 64.45
Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - SBD
Terrain/Vegetation - Pond/Flat/Open and wooded
Present Use- None.
Abutting uses - Commercial/Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Pond/Skating/Swimming Picnicking
Recommendations - Protect as potential family multi-use area (swimming, picnicking, skating)

19. Map/Parcel ID - 88/14
Ownership - Pad
Location - Off Bedford Street
Area/Acres -14.6
Access Overall – Difficult (despite Rte.28 frontage?)
Zoning - SBD
Terrain/Vegetation - Flat/wetlands vegetation
Present Uses- Unused
Abutting Uses - commercial (Abuts site 18 above)
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Dense woodland/none
Recommendations - None - Currently protected as wetlands
20. Map/Parcel ID - 119/56,58
Ownership - Kravitz
Location - South Bedford St
Area/Acres - 29.73
Access - Overall Limited Access from Bedford/Fairly good from Keith Place
Zoning - SBD, small portion in R-AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Partially wooded, partial open/nonfunctioning cranberry bog
Present Use - None
Abutting Uses - Residential to the west, commercial north and south
Notable Features/Potential uses - Nice white pine forest/forest field interface
Recommendation - Protect because of good wildlife habitat/walking/birding
21. Map/Parcel ID - 119/19
Ownership-Beninati
Area/Acres - 8.5
No other findings
22. Map/Parcel ID -126/7
Ownership - Stiles and Hart
Location - Off lower end of Bedford Street
Area/Acres - 37.6
Access Overall - Access through private property
Zoning - SBD
Terrain/Vegetation - Woods, waterfront, flat to rolling
Present use - Nothing
Abutting use - -Commercial/ power line
Notable features/ Potential Uses - Abuts Taunton River/power lines/ Canoe landing, walking trails, picnicking
Recommendations - Because of river location and multitude potential uses, land should be protected.

23. Map/Parcel ID - 120/6,7,28
Ownership - Wood
Location - Off entrance road to prison (off Bedford Street)
Area/Acres - 19.96
Access Overall - Limited
Zoning - SBD
Terrain - Flat/Scrub, Bushes
Present use - None
Abutting uses - State Correctional Institution
Notable Features/Potential Uses - None apparent
Recommendations — Because of location [surrounded by BCC land], protection not recommended
24. Map/Parcel ID 102/3,4,6
Ownership - Curtin
Location - Off Conant Street
Area/Acres - 25.05
Access Overall - Good but through private property
Zoning - R-A/B
Terrain/Vegetation - Wooded, flat to gently rolling/Stream running through/Pine forest
Present Use - Small portion residential, rest unused pine forest
Abutting Uses - State Prison [other state land to north, south and east]
Residential/Town owned
Notable Features/Potential uses - Wildlife habitat, walking trails/Connections to other protected land
Recommendations - Protection recommended for walking trails and connection to other open space.
25. Map/Parcel ID - 63/48.87,88
Ownership - Nelson
Location - Conant Street
Area/Acres - 6.05
Access Overall - On street but no driveway
Zoning - R/C
Terrain/Vegetation - Sloping open fields, possible woods In back
Present use - Open field/Haying
Abutting uses - Residential/Wooded lots
Notable Features/Potential uses - Beautiful vista
Recommendation - Continue 61A

26. Map/Parcel ID - 122/22; 129/1,2; 134/51
Ownership - Stiles and Hart
Location - Off Summer Street near state prison
Area/Acres - 169.9
Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - R-A/B
Terrain/Vegetation - Flat/partly wooded
Present use - Light Industrial and wooded
Abutting uses - Free and cloistered residential
Notable Features/Potential uses - Long shore on Taunton River/Boating and camping
Recommendation - Because of potential historical significance, proximity to Taunton River and many potential uses, land should be protected
27. Map/Parcel ID - 50/40, 92
Ownership - Dantono
Location - Laurel Street
Area/Acres - 11.7
Access Overall - Driveway
Zoning - R-C; R-AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Flat, woods, and wetlands
Present use - Commercial/vacant
Abutting uses - Residential [92] borders on state forest
Notable Features - Pine wooded and borders state forest
Recommendations - Because parcel abuts state forest protection would be advantageous, but because of limited access & some nearby residential development, protection is questionable.
28. Map/Parcel ID - 37/11
Ownership - Tunewicz
Location - Walnut Street
Area/Acres - 7.5
Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - R-C/D
Terrain/Vegetation - Flat
Present use - vacant lot
Abutting uses - commercial/retail residential
Notable Features - None.
Recommendations - Due. to location and size protection is not recommended
29. Map/Parcel ID - 122/10
Ownership - Wood

Location - Summer Street
Area/Acres - 10.1
Access Overall - Limited [‘Frontage on Summer St.]
Zoning - R-A/B
Terrain/Vegetation - Wetland
Present use - None
Abutting uses - Residential/River
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Abuts Taunton River and is proximate to other open space
Recommendations - Because of location to river and other space, protection is recommended.

30. Map/Parcel ID - 27/6; 40/7,8
Ownership - Morse Bros..
Location - Off East St
Area/acres - 129-9
Access Overall - Limited [but much wooded frontage on Plymouth St.]
Zoning - R- A/B
Terrain/Vegetation – flat open area [bordered by pine woods]
Present use - Cranberry bog [inc. reservoir].
Abutting uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Wetlands Open Space - no potential
Recommendations – continue protection/cranberry bog
31. Map/Parcel ID - 67/3
Ownership - Perkins
Location - Cherry St. by Taunton River
Area/Acres - 143-7
Access Overall - Limited access driveway
Zoning - R-A/B
Terrain/Vegetation - gently rolling/ mixed fields and woods
Present use - small portion for hay; rest wooded
Abutting uses - residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - extensive river access/hiking trails, cross-country skiing, haying. Land abuts the Taunton River, [is] across the river from Wyman Meadows and Wildlands Trust Land.
Recommendations - Because of prime location and mixed environment, land should be protected. A “Childs Bridge” cluster development with a sizable riverside Conservation Restriction has been.
32. Map/Parcel ID - 89/3
Ownership - Doherty
Location - Conant Street
Area/Acres - 6.33

Access Overall –
Easy/driveway
Zoning - R/C
Terrain/Vegetation - Wooded
Present use - Residential
Abutting uses - Residential and state correctional institution
Notable Features/Potential uses - Continued residential
Recommendations - none

33. Map/Parcel ID - 60/8
Ownership - Chaffee
Location - Off Pleasant Street
Area/Acres - 2.08
Access Overall - Good
Zoning - R/A8
Terrain/ Vegetation - Flat farm
Present Use - Farm
Abutting uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Active farm
Recommendations - Keep active farm
34. Map/Parcel ID - 80/4,9,10,11,29; 93/1,2,3,4,5,6,:
Ownership - Lehtola
Location - Auburn Street
Area/Acres - 349.2
Access Overall - Easy road access/parking
Zoning - R - A/B
Terrain/Vegetation - Flat to gently rolling open fields
Present use - Portion used for hay fields
Abutting uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential uses - Land abuts Taunton River Development rights can be purchased for farm use
Recommendations - Because of proximity to Taunton River, land should be protected.
35. Map/Parcel ID - 61/47,98,160
Ownership - Wood
Location - Off of South Drive
Area/Acres - 0.5
Access Overall - Easy
Zoning - R/C
Terrain/Vegetation - Wetlands
Present Use - None
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Stream/Wetlands and proximity to Hogg Farm

Recommendations - Protection inherent due to wetlands nature of property

36. Map/Parcel ID - 132/15
Ownership - Flaherty
Location - Off Green Street
Area/Acres - 25.43
Access Overall - Limited parking/ Easy access
Zoning - R/AB
Terrain/Vegetation - Open field/Abuts Taunton River
Present Uses - None
Abutting Uses - Residential
Notable Features/Potential Uses - Access to Taunton River, beautiful open field
Recommendations - Because [of] access to river and location, land should be protected for potential family activities.

Appendix B

Areas potentially affected by Major Goals and Objectives and the Five Year Action Plan

Under Goals 1A, 1B and 4A

Acquisition/ protection of scenic Ch. 61A open fields along South St. for continued farming unless saved under local TDR provisions. Possibly at town initiative. Parcels 74-10; 74- 39; 74-25,26

Examination of potential protection and possible mixed development (housing, farm land, riverside habitat) of the approximately 200 acres of inactive, low-lying farmland between Curve St. and the Taunton River. Parcels 91/3,4,5 and 6

Under Goals 1A and 2A

Protection of scenic productive land along North and Pleasant Streets and elsewhere through acquisition of Conservation Restrictions through town or non-profit actions, through state acquisition of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs), or through State programs supporting investment in continuing farm operations. Parcels 46/15; 46/126; 73/22; 60/8

Under Goals 1A, 2B, 2C and 6B

Acquisition of a swath of streamside farm fields. This refers to portions of the Lehtola and Cumberland Farms land and other opportunities. - 93/1,2,3,4

Acquisition of streamside backlands (next to and behind an electric company substation) south of the High Street Water Department lands where the Taunton River starts at the junction of the Town and Matfield Rivers, and creation of pedestrian access possibly through a boardwalk and/or along the powerline. Parcels 24/11,12

Other acquisitions refer to the riverside portions of the major Stile and Hart brickworks property (parcels 122-2; 129-1,2; 134-5) and the undeveloped portion crossed by a powerline (parcel 126-7), and to private Ch. 61 woodland. Parcel 122-10.

Acquisition of Ch.61A land on south bank of Town River at West Bridgewater line; exploration of a streamside trail to nearby Iron Works Park Parcels 10-73, 74, 170

Under Goals 1A, 2B and 5A Acquisition of open fields on Conant Street southeast of Carver's Pond for vistas, continued agriculture, grasslands habitat and neighborhood open space. (Beyond Ch. 61 recommendation.) Parcels 63-48, 87,88.

Under Goals 1A, 2C Acquisition of all or part of varied Riverside Perkins 61A property, possible at town initiative if undeveloped and not offered. Parcel 67-3

Under Goal 2A. Identification and designation of Scenic Roads under MGL Ch.40 S.15 so that roadway projects may cut or remove trees and tear down stonewalls or portions within the public right only following a Planning Board hearing. Candidate roads include all or portions of Auburn Street, Spruce Street, Summer Street (South of Flagg Street), Elm Street (Northern portions), Plymouth Street (East of Pond Street), South Street south of South Drive), and Lakeside Drive along the edge Lake Nippenickett

Under Goals 2A, 2B and 2C Acquisition / protection of Ch.61A “Beautiful Fields” on the Taunton River with frontage on Green Street and within potential streamside walking distance of the proposed expanded Titicut Conservation Area. Possibly at town initiative. Parcel 135/5

Under Goals 2A, 2B, 3A , 6A and 6B

Acquisition of selected private lands around north end of Carver’s Pond - potentially all or portions of parcels 49/28,31; 62/35 and 48/25

Acquisition of inactive bog and woodland between South Bedford St. and the Keith Place. Parcels 119-56,58

Acquisition of wooded 61A land between BCC land and other state holdings, and contiguous with a town parcel across Bedford St. from recommended multi-use site 18. Parcels 102-3,4,6

Acquisition of Ch. 61A of wooded wetlands between the Hanson Farm and Forest Drive/Ledgewood Drive to give access to potential trails through farms to the north and on to extensive Ouimet swamp lands and state-owned Hockomock Swamp fringe on the W. Bridgewater line. (Beyond Ch. 61 recommendations) Parcel 73-23

Another high priority example is acquisition of site 18, an inactive Ch.61A bog, sand pit, pond and woodland between South Bedford St. and the Keith Place neighborhood with potential for swimming, picnicking and related recreation. Parcels 88-10,67; 101- 4,5 .

Integration of public and private cluster lands with adjacent public rights-of-way. Examples are behind Dundee Drive and Cobblestone Lane giving all residents use of a linked system north past Pleasant St. to the Toole property, and south through the golf course and land of Heather Hills Drive almost to the Raynham line.

Under Goal 2B

One example of converting appropriate town-owned parcels to conservation land to provide permanent local open space would be land at the corner of Winter and Conant Streets or on South Brook west of Hayward Street..

Identification and acquisition of selected Ch. 61, 61A and 61B parcels when offered or other key holdings near or behind existing and prospective development to provide nearby open space for present and future neighborhoods.

Low-cost acquisition/protection of wooded wetlands surrounded by housing on three sides north of Forest Street to provide permanent neighborhood open space. Parcels 86;2,60,61,72.

Expansion of the State Forest by adding land along South Brook to the north, and to Walnut Street to the east along with Ch. 61A land to the southwest. Parcel 50-40,92

Under Goals 2B and 6A Expansion of the State Forest by adding land on the north side of South Brook along lots 36/34; 79 and to Walnut Street to the east along lot 51/15.

Under Goals 2B and 6B

The Toole Land, Andruk Land to Olde Scotland Links proposal would use Ch. 61A parcels 72/48 and private parcels 85/9 and 98/6 to complete a corridor partly along the powerline from the Toole Land to the Links.

Acquisition of land from town-owned Emerald Lane to the northwestern corner of Sturdevant's Pond to allow a trail from just south of the Vernon Land to the Pond. Parcel 124/12

Under Goal 2D The discussion of signage particularly refers to poor or missing signs at the Tuckerwood Reservation, Wyman Meadow, and the Wildands Trust's North Fork Preserve

Under Goal 3A and 5A Acquisition of potential Zone II land west of Carver's Pond, particularly parcel 48-25.

Under Goal 4A Zoning examples to be studied would include the present total industrial zoning of Elm St. leading to scattered industrial/commercial uses among houses and the potentially on the northernmost farmland

Under Goals 5A and 5B Acquisition of two woodlands parcels west of the Aldrich Street to make a wildlife corridor across North St. to the Hockomock Swamp Wildlife Management Area through a small intervening parcels 9/3,4 and 19/11 with possible easements across part of residential parcels 9/1 and 19/22

Under 5A and 6B Continued protection of the extensive wooded swamp north of Pleasant St. and east of Route 24 and development of trails in cooperation with the private owner. This is in the Bio-Map of land crucial for wildlife diversity. The northern and western portions are in the State's Hockomock Wildlife Management Area while the 263.3-acre southern portion is under Ch. 61B (recreation land). The private section has some upland forest which the Inventory team found to be a "beautiful wooded area" with potential for "Extensive walking/ nature trails." Parcel 59/9

Acquisition/ protection of scenic Ch. 61A open fields along South Street for continued farming unless saved under local TDR provisions. Possibly at town initiative. Parcels 74-10/39; 75/25,26

Another objective would be acquisition/protection of the fields south of the Scotland Playground for continued farming, and possible community gardens. Parcel 72/ 58.

Under Goals 6A Any need to permanently protect publicly used private land at Skeeter Mill Pond ("Flynn's Pond") would involve parcels 50/11, 12, 84

Under Goals 6A and 6B Acquisition and development of 64.5 acres of woods, sand pits and open water on site Ch. 61A site 18 west of Bedford St. and east of South Street for swimming, skating and picnicking, possibly at town initiative. Parcels 88-10,68;102-2,4,5,37

.

.

Appendix C

Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Self Evaluation

- Town Letter on Non-Discriminatory Practices
- Conservation Sites

Most conservation areas had very limited accessibility beyond their entrance areas due to irregular terrain and steep slopes. Summary comments on accessibility and some possibilities for improvement are noted in the site descriptions in Chapter V while greater detail is in the ADA assessment forms from the Open Space Committee.

- Recreation Sites

The recreations sites surveyed by the Bridgewater Disability Commission were also largely inaccessible though with some opportunities are noted in the site descriptions in Chapter V.

Note: Many responses were quite limited so survey form pages which were all marked “NA” or were entirely blank are omitted.

Conservation Sites

In addition to the following forms, there are summary comments on accessibility as part of the site description in Chapter V.

Recreation Sites

Note: The Rainbows's End evaluation combines findings of the Recreation Commission and the Disabilities Commission; others are by the Disabilities Commission alone. The Commission found that most sites are inaccessible, leaving specific recommendations n for a future Transition Plan. Site R-5, the Star park/playground, is omitted because it is a totally unimproved wooded site accessible only be a few informal paths.