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Analysis of Needs

The Open Space Committee generated this Analysis of Needs by reviewing the 2014 survey conducted by Vision 2020, assessing input from a series of public forums held in 2012 through 2014 in association with the Town's Master Plan process (particularly its sections on Open Space, Natural Resources, and Public Facilities), and other research and documentation on Arlington's resource, community, and management needs. This analysis summarizes the major open space issues and concerns facing the Town in 2015 and beyond.

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

The Open Space Committee continues to address the following five general areas of concern as outlined in the 2007-2012 Plan:

- Regional resource protection needs
- Historical resource protection needs
- Water bodies resource protection needs
- Fisheries and wildlife protection needs
- Vegetation protection needs

It is understood that these areas of need have broad overlap; however, the OSC presents each specific resource protection need under the area of concern in which it best fits. Many of the issues addressed here are also described in the Arlington Master Plan, which was adopted by the

Arlington Redevelopment Board in February 2015 (available on the Town website or in the Planning Department).

Regional Resource Protection Needs

Successful implementation of a good open space plan for Arlington requires cooperation with nearby communities and resource-oriented organizations in the region. A regional natural resources review would help to protect virtually all of Arlington's natural open spaces. Examination of their total ecological requirements and effects on the health of regional resources must be ongoing.

Recent and proposed developments in the vicinity of Alewife Brook and Reservation in East Arlington exemplify why regional coordination is so important. The impending development of the Belmont Uplands (40B residential development on a former silver maple forest surrounded by wetlands) and the recent construction of several large residential and commercial properties in adjacent Cambridge on the former Arthur D. Little property and on nearby streets have seriously impacted the fragile ecology and flooding problems, as well as traffic congestion and pollution, in that tri-community region near the Alewife T Station and Route 2. The 17-acre Mugar property in Arlington is the last large undeveloped area in the former Great Swamp area, and will need concerted efforts to ensure its protection for both wildlife habitat and flood control.

Additional networking and regional planning are needed to maximize the design, use, and maintenance of regional recreational resources, such as bicycle and pedestrian paths and aquatic and terrestrial wildlife corridors. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Master Plan for the Alewife Reservation included construction of the Alewife Brook Greenway trail that links the existing Minuteman Bikeway to the Mystic River Reservation in Medford. Further cooperation among state and local groups will enhance the area with additional pathways and amenities.

The annual spring migrations of the Alewife and Blueback Herring (via the Mystic River and Alewife Brook) that spawn in Little Pond and the Mystic

Lakes have decreased significantly since colonial times. The DCR's restoration of the dam and installation of a fish ladder between the Upper and Lower Mystic Lakes on the Arlington-Medford border has led to a recovery of the fishery since 2012. However, public access to the lakes in Arlington is limited, and further planning is needed to enhance such opportunities.

Many of the historical landscapes in Arlington reveal their full significance only when presented in the context of their relationship to other communities. For example, Mill Brook flows for nearly three miles through Arlington, but it originates in Arlington's Great Meadows in East Lexington. This 183-acre site is owned by the Town of Arlington, but renewed negotiations between the towns are needed to ensure its permanent protection as conservation land.

Historical Resource Protection Needs

Arlington residents have shown a continuing respect and reverence for the Town's historical facilities and spaces. The most prominent area is the Civic Block, which includes the Town Hall, Robbins Library, Whittemore-Robbins House, Winfield Robbins Memorial Garden, and the Old Burying Ground. Recent work has included renovations to the interior of Town Hall, restoration of the Cyrus E. Dallin Flag Pole and sculpture next to Town Hall, restoration of the Dallin "Menotomy Indian Hunter" sculpture, renovation and expansion of the Robbins Library, and renovation of the Whittemore Robbins House. Additional repairs and constant maintenance by the Town in collaboration with local volunteers are needed to ensure that these historic resources are preserved.

The open space around the historic Jason Russell House in Arlington Center derives much of its significance from the regional battle fought there during the Revolutionary War. The Battle Road Scenic Byway links four towns – Arlington, Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord – through which the British regulars passed on April 19, 1775. These towns, with Minute Man National Historical Park, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, need to continue their

collaborations to highlight the historic, cultural, recreational, scenic, and natural resources along this route.

In order to protect its historic and cultural resource areas, the Town needs to first identify what resources are present. Over the past three decades, the Arlington Historical Commission (AHC) has documented many of Arlington's historic resources on inventory forms. However, while these forms include extensive historical and architectural narratives, the majority of them and their associated photographs are now more than 15 years old. Furthermore, the Town still has significant locations, resources, and typologies that remain undocumented. Arlington also needs to strengthen its relationship with Massachusetts Historic Commission and Historic Massachusetts, two state agencies that focus on historic sites and properties, and to avail itself of grants and other funding for preservation projects, especially for much-needed work on Town-owned buildings, sculptures, and other structures.

Ideas to redevelop areas within the Mill Brook corridor from the Arlington Reservoir to Meadowbrook Park and the Lower Mystic Lake are currently under active discussion. In the mid-1630s, Captain Cooke's gristmill was built on the brook near Mystic Street at the location that is now Cooke's Hollow conservation land. This was the first water-powered gristmill in the United States. Many other mills and mill ponds were built along the brook during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The only mill that survives is the Old Schwamb Mill in Arlington Heights, which continues as a museum with demonstrations of the historic manufacture of oval wood frames. Many other buildings of historical and architectural significance exist in the Mill Brook Valley, and some are on the National Historic Register. The enhancement of this corridor would reinvigorate understanding of its heritage and access to this unique natural and historic resource in the middle of town.



Historic Old Schwamb Mill next to Mill Brook in Arlington Heights. Credit: Ann LeRoyer



Volunteers harvest water chestnuts at Arlinaton Reservoir. Credit: David White

Water Resource Protection Needs

All of the water bodies in Arlington face the threat of nonpoint pollution within their contributing watersheds due to runoff from roadways, houses, and businesses, accelerating the process of eutrophication. In particular, the following water bodies face specific problems.

Spy Pond receives runoff from Route 2 and the surrounding densely developed area via more than 40 storm drains that bring in excess nutrients and large amounts of road salt and sand. A sandbar which threatens to choke off a corner of the pond has built up from the drain from Route 2. Efforts to get Mass Highway to remove it have so far been unsuccessful and must be continued.

Arlington Reservoir faces nonpoint pollution problems from pesticides and fertilizers from a nearby farm and surrounding homes and roadways. Two storm drains in Lexington discharge directly into the Reservoir. There are several aquatic invasive plants growing in the Reservoir, but the species with the biggest impact is the water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) which forms thick barriers on the water surface. It is partially controlled by manual and mechanical harvesting during the summer. However, Reservoir management is sometimes difficult because the Reservoir is located in both Arlington and Lexington. A collaborative management plan overseen by both towns would allow for more effective monitoring and maintenance of the Reservoir.

The Mystic Lakes have suffered from the nonpoint runoff from the Mystic Valley Parkway and lawn and yard maintenance. Aquatic weeds such as milfoil have proven both a hazard to human safety and a contribution to the eutrophication of the water body, which borders Arlington, Medford and Winchester. The Mystic River Watershed Association conducts regular monitoring and cleanups of invasive plants, but additional efforts are needed.

Mill Brook runs from the northwestern border with Lexington near the Arlington Reservoir through the center of town and into the Lower Mystic

Lake. It faces pollution assaults all along its route via nonpoint sources and storm drains. Culverting and physical barriers make Mill Brook, especially upstream of Cooke's Hollow, an untenable habitat for fish and native aquatic mammals. A concerted commitment to revitalize this natural resource and designate a Mill Brook corridor path is needed.

Alewife Brook is one of the most polluted water bodies in Town, with combined sewer overflows that are activated in heavy rains along its banks from Cambridge, Somerville, and the MWRA system. An official Tri-Community committee has been studying this problem for years, and construction is now underway to separate some of these combined drains in Cambridge, although this has not solved the problem.

Hill's Pond, originally created to feed Farmer Hill's cows, is a scenic pond in Menotomy Rocks Park that supports fish and other pond life. The Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park and the Town's DPW work to treat the pond, but additional funding is needed to repair and maintain it properly.

Fisheries and Wildlife Protection Needs

Arlington has breeding, migrating, or wintering populations of invertebrates, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals that require open space. To sustain these populations in the natural resource areas described earlier, the Town should, among other things, consider the following:

- Effect of commercial or residential development adjacent to open space
- Effect of an increase in active recreational uses in open space
- Effect of new or increased level of pollution in the Town's waters
- Effect of increased grass areas and the spread of invasive plants on the food sources and habitats for wildlife
- Effect of climate change on waterways and other wildlife habitats\

Vegetation Protection Needs

Wetlands perform important environmental functions and are essential habitats for birds and many other creatures. Arlington at present has very few wetlands, since many were filled in as the town was developed. Construction of new buildings and streets has affected the hydrology of all wetland areas, and the vegetation in the remaining wetlands is in need of protection. The expansion of invasive species, notably Phragmites in wetland areas and Japanese Knotweed elsewhere, affects other vegetation throughout the watershed, and better controls are needed to manage these problems.

Although use of native trees and other beneficial plants generally has increased, invasive and exotic species continue to spread in both wetlands (e.g., Phragmites and Lythrum Salicaria) and uplands (e.g., Polygonum cuspidatum, Celastrus orbiculatus). Some invasive species such as Oriental Bittersweet directly damage existing trees and other plants, while other invasives just displace them. As mentioned above, most invasive plants reduce the food available for wildlife. Environmentally safe and appropriate control efforts are needed on a Town-wide basis.

Although the Environmental Design Review zoning bylaw of Arlington includes requirements for landscaping of new commercial developments (discussed in chapter 4), no provision exists for protecting wildlife habitat, except through the Wetlands Protection Act. In most commercial, public, and private landscaping projects, vegetation is usually selected on the basis of cost, appearance, and durability; there is less awareness of the effect on birds and other wildlife native to the area.

B. Summary of Community Needs

The Open Space Committee generated the following community needs analysis from:

- Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) reports and capital plans (2010-2014)

- PRC-commissioned ADA Study (2014) prepared by the Institute for Human-Centered Design
- Review of community feedback on the 2014 survey by Vision 2020
- Input from several public forums sponsored by the Town as part of the Master Plan process, and through ongoing meetings and reports
- Analysis of accomplishments since publication of the previous 2007-2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan (Chapter 2)
- Analysis of Chapters 3 through 6 of this 2015 Plan

Natural Open Space Needs

Several surveys conducted by the Open Space Committee over recent years and by Vision 2020 in 2014 indicate strong interest in natural open space areas for passive recreation, including walking, bird watching, and quiet contemplation (See Appendix B—Vision 2020, 2014 report). These needs for peaceful public places to walk and relax are currently met at wooded and meadow areas such as Menotomy Rocks Park, Arlington Reservoir, Arlington’s Great Meadows in Lexington, Symmes Woods and two new parks at the Arlington360 complex, McClennen Park, Hill’s Hill, Turkey Hill, Mt. Gilboa, Spy Pond Park, the Minuteman Bikeway and the Alewife Brook Greenway.

Access to water bodies is especially valued. Trails around Spy Pond are limited to a few unconnected areas, and many residents would like to see a walking trail around the entire pond. The recent acquisition of Elizabeth Island in Spy Pond offers an additional space for conservation and passive recreation, though it is accessible only by small boat. State DCR properties in the Alewife Reservation and the Mystic River Reservation include water bodies and natural habitats in Arlington, with recently improved access and trails along Alewife Brook and the Mystic River, but limited access to the Mystic Lakes.

Park and Recreation Needs

The same surveys noted above indicate important needs and concerns about active outdoor recreational facilities. According to the Park and

Recreation Commission (PRC), many of Arlington's playing fields are designated for multi-sport use. During the busy spring, summer, and fall sports seasons, most of these fields are in constant use by high school teams, organized youth sports leagues, and the public. Sports participation has increased in recent years, which creates further field availability and maintenance problems. For example, Arlington's Soccer Club program serves over 1,800 children. The addition of youth lacrosse has also increased demand for the soccer/utility fields, and the addition of a Little League softball program and summer leagues has increased demand for baseball fields. See Appendix C for the most recent PRC multi-year capital plan.

In 2014, the PRC commissioned an assessment of the accessibility of all its properties, which was conducted by the Institute for Human Centered Design (Appendix E). Much work needs to be done to bring Arlington’s parks, playgrounds and playing fields in compliance with ADA requirements. This work will be accomplished through capital renovations and targeted projects.

Specific Needs for Playing Fields

As a result of Arlington's limited field space and continuing high youth and adult participation in recreational sports, most playing fields are heavily used throughout the year. The Park and Recreation Commission regularly documents the number of Arlington's playing fields and the number of sports teams that play on those fields. A field policy is in place to help ensure equitable access and assist in protection of the Town’s limited and valuable field assets.

The Park and Recreation Commission indicates the need for field upgrading and much better and more consistent field maintenance so that fields stay in the proper condition for use, thereby saving the time and money otherwise needed for serious field renovation. Proper maintenance will also provide better compliance with ADA requirements. Continuing to encourage appropriate use and enforcement of Town bylaws is also essential to helping maintain playing fields. The addition of two multi-use fields and one youth baseball field at McClennen Park and the completion

of the Arlington High School W.A. Peirce Field complex renovation will allow the PRC to periodically rest some fields and reduce overall wear and tear, as recommended in a plan prepared by the Field Maintenance and User Fee Study Committee in 2005. It is also recommended that the PRC continue to upgrade facilities for swimming, basketball, and children's playgrounds.



McClennen Park now has two multi-use fields Credit: Courtesy of Arlington Open Space Committee

Ideal Number of Playing Fields

The Park and Recreation Commission has evaluated the number of playing fields needed and recommends a total of 28 fields. The following narrations, prepared by the Park and Recreation Commission, explain the status and need for additional playing fields:

Baseball Fields

Arlington has a sufficient number of major league baseball fields. All five major league diamonds are situated in different areas of the Town, and afford maximum formal and informal use. Each field accommodates another sport during the non-baseball season. Three of the baseball fields

(North Union, Robbins Farm and W.A. Peirce) are limited to use by younger players because of their short outfields. PRC recommends that one of these shorter fields be expanded to accommodate older players who need a full-size field.

Youth Baseball/Softball

Fifteen fields with 60-foot base paths are scattered throughout Arlington. Softball and youth baseball fields have somewhat different configurations, as youth baseball fields have a pitcher's mound and softball fields do not. While a new youth baseball field was added at McClennen Park and the addition of lights and renovation at Buck Field has increased its available playing time, the PRC continues to recommend adding one field dedicated to softball, which is growing in popularity.

Soccer (100 yards plus) and Soccer (40 X 60 yards)

Of the fourteen soccer fields, five are located in one area (the Magnolia/Thorndike complex in East Arlington) and cannot be used simultaneously. Soccer continues to be the largest youth sport in Arlington. Two multi-use fields have been created at McClennen Park and a multi-sport practice field was added during the renovation of the W.A. Peirce Field complex at Arlington High School. The main playing field at that complex is a multi-sport field that was renovated to state-of-the-art condition with field turf. This surface allows for consistent playability with minimal maintenance. The High School has priority of use of this field; however it is strongly recommended that this community asset continue to be accessible to community soccer, football, lacrosse, and field hockey programs.

Football

The only football field in Arlington is located at Arlington High School (W.A. Peirce Field). Nine teams (including Arlington High School, Arlington Catholic High School, and Pop Warner teams) use this field. A multi-sport practice field at W.A. Peirce Field and a multi-use field with goal posts at McClennen Park have increased the available inventory of football practice fields. Arlington Catholic High School has also renovated its practice

playing field on Summer St. with field turf and does allow other community uses of this field, when not in use by the school.



The only dedicated football field in Arlington is at the W. A. Peirce Field at Arlington High School. Courtesy of Arlington Open Space Committee

Field Hockey

The Park and Recreation Commission manages one field hockey field, which is located in the outfield of the Summer Street baseball field. Since the renovation at W.A. Peirce Field, many games have been relocated to that turf field, which should continue to be the case.

Lacrosse

Arlington has witnessed a surge in participation in the sport of lacrosse. Several boys and girls teams have formed at the high school and youth levels. The fields needed for play are shared with soccer, but both sports cannot be played simultaneously on adjoining fields. This continues to

place additional scheduling and maintenance demands on the existing fields.

Field Development Solutions

As a built-out community, Arlington has severe restrictions on its ability to acquire land and add to or reallocate playing fields. The PRC continues to renovate existing fields, with an eye toward possible expansion in the Poets Corner area.

Special Population Needs

As described in chapter 3 under Community Needs and Population Characteristics, Arlington's population is shifting gradually, with increases in the youngest and oldest age groups, both of which will have needs for more and different types of open space and recreational facilities. The Park and Recreation Commission has an ongoing program of capital improvements to upgrade playground equipment and recreational facilities for pre-schoolers and for school-aged children, including playing fields and the ice skating rink. Other improvements to parks in general include the addition of benches, port-a-potties, and shelters from the sun. A new multi-generational park and an accessible playground were installed at the Summer Street Sports Complex a few years ago to offer activities for all ages and abilities, including bocce courts, board-game tables, a basketball court, exercise equipment, and shaded sitting areas.

Special efforts to meet the recreational needs of handicapped residents are being addressed as part of implementing the ADA Self-Evaluation (see Appendix E), as well as through regular maintenance and capital funding. The Town's Master Plan, completed in 2015, also addresses the need for a thorough ADA Self-Evaluation of all Town properties, to complement the one conducted for the parks and recreational facilities, including an updated ADA Transition Plan.

The needs of Arlington's environmental justice populations are not significantly different from those noted above for all residents, but recent improvements in the designated EJ parts of town have brought new

resources to them. For example, with the rebuilding of the Thompson School in East Arlington, in the heart of the minority/income block group, a new playground and a refurbished spray pool and picnic area are now accessible to all residents. The adjacent baseball fields were also regraded. The new Alewife Brook Greenway within DCR's Alewife Brook Reservation also borders this neighborhood.

A frequently mentioned need that would address many groups simultaneously but has not yet been met is a multi-purpose community center for all ages and income levels. Seniors and teenagers are two age groups that would be most well-served by such a facility. Currently the primary indoor recreational facility used by teens is the Ed Burns Arena. Some residents are eager for an indoor swimming pool, and others want more safe spaces for indoor activities such as game nights. The Arlington Master Plan addresses this long-standing need for a community center, and it is hoped that future CPA funding could help make it happen.

Department of Public Works' Needs

Arlington's Department of Public Works (DPW) needs work-yard space for collecting, storing, and distributing certain kinds of materials, such as tree parts and other organic refuse collected after major storms, and for seasonal snow storage. Former sites next to Meadowbrook Park in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and at the Arlington Reservoir are no longer available. Over the past few years, excess vegetation and snow has been placed temporarily on the parking lot next to the Arlington Reservoir, but that is not a practical solution for the long term. Out of town locations probably need to be found since there are no other large spaces in Arlington that would be appropriate for such uses.

SCORP

In 2012, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs completed the Massachusetts' Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to help guide the distribution of federal funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to state agencies and municipalities for the acquisition of open space, renovation of parks, and

development of new parks. The SCORP is a planning document that discusses the available recreational resources in a state, as well as its needs, and identifies the gaps between the two.

Goals and action steps were developed after distilling all of the information gathered through the public participation process. These four goals include:

1. Increase the availability of all types of trails for recreation.
2. Increase the availability of water-based recreation.
3. Invest in recreation and conservation areas that are close to home for short visits.
4. Invest in racially, economically, and age diverse neighborhoods given their projected increase in participation in outdoor recreation.

These goals will meet the needs of Massachusetts residents, but also the goals of America's Great Outdoors (AGO) for investments in urban parks and community green spaces. Multiple SCORP goals also coalesce with the Commonwealth's desire to increase the share of bicycling and walking among Massachusetts transportation choices.

The SCORP goals are consistent with the goals and objectives of Arlington's OSRP. For example, the Plan has defined several major corridors (Minuteman Bikeway, Mill Brook, and the Alewife Brook Greenway) from which connections to various parks and other open space resources will be enhanced. Additionally, the Town is working with adjacent communities, such as Lexington's ACROSS Lexington program and bike trails in Cambridge, Somerville, and Belmont that emanate from the Minuteman Bikeway to build better regional trail networks and connections within and outside the Town's boundaries.

The Town has invested in outdoor water-based recreation in areas including Spy Pond and the Reservoir. The Town's open space and recreation facilities are well-distributed around the community so that they are relatively convenient to most residents. Finally, the Town has a robust and diverse recreation program that serves all its residents, as well as private programs through organizations such as the Arlington Boys and

Girls Club (Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs 2012).



Alewife Brook Greenway on DCR land in East Arlington. Credit: Ann LeRoyer

C. Management Needs, Potential Change of Use

The primary management needs Arlington faces today relate to how the Town maintains its existing open spaces and recreational facilities. In particular, the Town needs to:

- Increase funding and staffing for management, maintenance, and upgrading of open spaces and outdoor recreational facilities;
- Formalize implementation of the playing field rotation and maintenance recommendations documented in 2005 by the Field User

Maintenance and Fee Study Committee and create sustainable DPW playing field maintenance schedules; and

- Empower the Open Space Committee to work more closely with Town departments and committees to facilitate, help implement, update, and advance the goals of this Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Town Open Space Management

Most communities in Massachusetts have struggled with inadequate revenues to maintain current levels of service since the passage of Proposition 2½, a statewide referendum voted more than 35 years ago that limits the amount of revenue a community can collect through the property tax. Arlington is no exception. All public services suffer as communities prioritize their allocation of revenues. Parks, playgrounds, and other open spaces must compete with other local needs as maintenance dollars are cut and personnel are reduced.

Until 1992-1993 park and recreation facilities were the responsibility of the Town's Department of Properties and Natural Resources, which was headed by one of seven department heads reporting to the Town Manager. Normal attrition, a hiring freeze, an early retirement program, and a reorganization of management structure resulted in a consolidation of Public Works, Properties and Natural Resources, and Engineering into one Department of Public Works with several divisions. This consolidation marked an important change in the way the Town managed its open spaces and recreation facilities.

While this new arrangement may have increased efficiency, it fails to recognize the importance of public properties and open spaces as a separate management entity. The Town does not have one professional staff member whose sole duty is to oversee the maintenance of open spaces and recreational facilities; rather this responsibility is shared among three departments: Recreation (recreational programming and limited facilities management for the Ed Burns Arena, Gibbs Gym, and Reservoir Beach); Public Works (maintenance); and Town Manager (management). Furthermore, the Town's public open spaces are overseen by many different boards and commissions with differing and sometimes conflicting missions (including Park and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee, Capital Planning Committee), as well as many independent Friends groups, sports organizations, and land stewards.

Because the DPW oversees the maintenance of most of Arlington's open spaces, as well as its major responsibilities for water, sewer, highways, and public building maintenance, open space budget needs are often weighed internally against other departmental needs and do not emerge in public debate as a separate interest. A dedicated natural resources manager with a trained staff and an established budget is needed to oversee and coordinate capital planning and maintenance for the Town's natural open spaces and recreational facilities.

A high level of open space interest and commitment exists on behalf of the residents who serve on the Open Space Committee, Park and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, and many other neighborhood and Friends groups. This interest indicates the potential for expanded citizen support for park, playground, and other open space revitalization, although legal and liability issues prevent volunteers from participating in key maintenance projects.

The Town's adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in November 2014 offers a new source of funds for certain open space and recreation projects, to supplement funding designated through the Capital Planning Committee and the regular Town budget process.



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

A good deal for Arlington

Arlington CPA campaign logo. Courtesy of Community Preservation Arlington.

Need for Overall Open Space Management Plan

Arlington needs an overall open space management plan that will make use of existing Town planning documents, management structures, and resources. This management plan would provide a roadmap for all of those involved in particular open spaces. It would make clear the lines of responsibilities and it would provide a way to implement many of the goals of this Open Space and Recreation Plan, as well as the Town's Master Plan. It would also be a tool for increased public support in making our parks and open spaces the best that they can be, and insuring that every part of the Town, and every major segment of the population, gets the most up-to-date and suitable facilities possible.

As part of reviewing the existing Town management and structure, a new overall open space management plan may make recommendations for change. For example, there is a need for open space and recreation interests to be a stronger part of the existing budget process. One way to do this is to have members with open space and recreation knowledge on the Capital Planning Committee to advocate for a long-range capital planning budget for open space and recreation facilities.

The Park and Recreation Commission maintains an ongoing multi-year capital plan. However, a stronger commitment is needed by the Town to fund the project requirements at appropriate levels and in a timely way. It is the hope of the PRC that additional funding sources, such as CPA, will be used to enhance capital funds provided by the Town to accomplish proposed improvements to parks, playgrounds, and playing fields under PRC jurisdiction. It is also the desire of the Commission to see improvements made to the funding mechanisms dedicated to ordinary maintenance, which are not provided by CPA.