

Town of Natick, Massachusetts

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN

2020 Update



Prepared by the: OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE &
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Photo credits: Mark Polette (top), Martin Kessel (bottom)

Prepared in compliance with the Open Space & Recreation Planner's Workbook
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Division of Conservation Services



DRAFT

TOWN OF NATICK

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

2020 UPDATE

Board of Selectmen

Jonathan Freedman, Chairman
Karen Adelman-Foster, Vice-Chair
Richard P. Jennett, Jr., Clerk
Michael J. Hickey, Jr.
Sue Salamoff

Open Space Advisory Committee

Martin Kessel, Chair
Doug Drenik, Vice-Chair
Mary Stuart, Co-Clerk
David Lodding, Co-Clerk
Terri Evans, Planning Board Representative
David Ordway, Recreation & Parks Commission
Representative
Doug Shepard, Conservation Commission Representative

Prepared by: Open Space Advisory Committee
Marianne Iarossi, Open Space Planner/Conservation Agent - Community &
Economic Development

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many Town of Natick boards, commissions and departments participated in supplying and/or reviewing information that went into the preparation of this report. These include, in particular:

Board of Selectmen
Conservation Commission
Recreation and Parks Commission
Planning Board
GIS Division, Department of Public Works
Community & Economic Development Department

A special acknowledgement is due to the residents of Natick who participated in the public outreach and provided valuable comments, and the *many* volunteers that continuously help in making our open spaces, trails, and parks the cherished gems the community experiences each and every day.

Thank you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1 - PLAN SUMMARY	1
SECTION 2 - INTRODUCTION	4
A. Statement of Purpose	4
B. Planning Process and Public Participation	6
SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY SETTING.....	9
A. Regional Context	9
B. Natick's History	11
C. Population Characteristics	12
D. Growth and Development Patterns	17
SECTION 4 - ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS.....	24
A. Geology, Soils and Topography	24
B. Landscape Character	26
C. Water Resources	27
D. Vegetation	30
E. Fisheries and Wildlife	36
F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments	40
G. Environmental Challenges	44
SECTION 5 - INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST.....	51
A. Introduction	51
B. Protected Open Space	51
C. Temporarily Protected Open Space	52
D. Other Private Lands	52
SECTION 6 – COMMUNITY VISION	78
A. Description of Process	78
B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals	78
SECTION 7 – ANALYSIS OF NEEDS.....	80
A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs	80
B. Summary of Community's Needs	81
C. Management Needs	86
SECTION 8 – OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 	88
SECTION 9: ACTION PLAN	89
SECTION 10: PUBLIC COMMENTS.....	90
SECTION 11: REFERENCES.....	91

LIST OF TABLES

3-1 Population Growth, 1990-2017	13
3-2 Ethnicity, 2000 and 2017	13
3-3 Population Projections to 2010, 2020, and 2030 by Age Cohort .	13
3-4 Income, 2000 and 2017	16
3-5 Land Use Changes, 1971-1999	20
4-1 General Soil Associations	25
4-2 Water Resources	28
4-3 Common Wetland and Upland Species Observed in Natick .	31
4-4 Wildlife Species in Natick	37
4-5 Vernal Pools	38
4-6 Rare Wildlife Species	40
4-7 Impaired Waters in Natick.	48
5-1 Protected Public Open Space and Recreation Parcels.	54
5-2 Protected Private Open Space and Recreation Parcels.	66
5-3 Conservation Restrictions	68
5-4 Chapter 61, 61A and 61B Lands	72
5-5 Private Cemeteries	74
5-6 Other Public Lands/Unprotected Lands	75

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1	Regional Context
Map 2	Zoning Map
Map 3	Bedrock Lithology
Map 4	General Soils Map
Map 5	Land Use
Map 6	Surface Waters
Map 7	Aquifers and Public Wells
Map 8	Zone II Areas
Map 9	BioMap2
Map 10	Estimated and Priority Habitats
Map 11	Scenic and Unique Resources
Map 12	Protected and Recreational Open Space
Map 13	Action Plan Map

SECTION 1 - PLAN SUMMARY

The Town of Natick is a primarily built out suburban community containing an array of open space and recreational assets for its residents and the region. Similar to other communities in the Greater Boston area, Natick is experiencing population growth and in turn, development pressures.

Very few remaining undeveloped tracts of land remain in Town. Historically, especially in recent decades, the Town has been proactive with land protection efforts. In addition, Natick is an appealing community for low density single family residential subdivisions. The Town should still continue to be proactive in land protection but in a more creative manner. This being said, the Town's priorities in 2020 and over the next several years boil down to being better stewards of existing assets and increasing accessibility of these assets for all.

This 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) aims to do that. The 2020 OSRP is an update of a previous plan completed in 2012. The plan contains the following major elements:

- A description of the public input utilized in developing the Plan;
- A demographic profile;
- A summary of recent and projected growth trends;
- An environmental description of the Town;
- An inventory of existing protected open space and recreation facilities;
- An analysis of open space and recreation needs;
- A statement of goals and objectives; and
- A seven-year Action Plan.

This plan highlights the need for protecting water resources and other sensitive environmental lands, including priority habitat areas, as well as the need for the preservation of cultural resources. It stresses the need for developing trails, improving recreation facilities, and addressing management/stewardship needs. It recommends a combination of acquisition and regulatory measures to expand the open space and recreation inventory, protect natural resources, increase access to both passive and active recreation resources, link open space areas to promote biodiversity and maintain migratory paths for wildlife and trails for humans, and expand the range of recreation resources that are available to serve the needs of residents of all ages and diverse interests.

The *Introduction* section (Section 2) summarizes the impressive key accomplishments made in regards to the Town of Natick's open space and recreation amenities since the 2012 OSRP such as permanent protection of new lands, park rebuilds, establishment of new trails, designation of new committees, creation of new maps, etc. This section also explains the public outreach process undertaken for this plan.

The *Community Setting* section (Section 3) notes the regional context, history, development patterns and population growth of Natick. It also includes an infrastructure profile, long term development patterns, and zoning. Natick's population and development is growing. Residents

today are utilizing more land per household than they were historically and demands on community needs such as infrastructure have been increasing. This all points to the importance of strategic development such as through cluster zoning or steering new development towards redevelopment opportunities such as downtown (practicing “smart growth”), and land protection efforts.



The Charles River. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

The *Environmental Inventory and Analysis* section (Section 4) describes the geology, soils and topography of the Town and includes a description of landscape character and scenic resources. Major surface waters, floodplains, and wetlands are noted and mapped along with public wells and aquifers. Priority habitat areas are also mapped and species that are endangered, threatened or of special concern are identified. This section also dives into the environmental challenges the community faces such as chronic flooding, contamination, ground and surface water pollution, environmental equity, and invasive species.

The *Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest* (Section 5) includes a detailed inventory of the open space and recreation lands in Natick. It identifies 2,031 acres of permanently protected open space and recreation land owned by the Town, State, abutting towns, private/non-profit groups, or protected with Agricultural Preservation Restrictions. Of this total acreage, 354 acres are held under Conservation Restrictions. There is another 448 acres considered as having limited, partial or temporary protection such as Chapter 61 lands, private cemeteries, and Town owned land that may possess open space and recreation qualities but are not permanently protected.

The *Community Vision* section (Section 6) describes the process used for public input that helped form the vision, goals and objectives.

The *Analysis of Needs* section (Section 7) identified a variety of needs and priorities that were compiled based off public outreach and staff and committee knowledge. Among these are the continued importance of preserving land; strong stewardship of natural resources; providing connections among open space areas; developing trails and other passive recreation facilities; improving maintenance of existing recreation facilities; increasing accessibility of and to open spaces; and increasing marketing and promotion of Natick's open space assets.

The *Goals & Objectives* section (Section 8) outlines the goals and objectives for the 2020 OSRP. The goals include:

1. Protect Natick's open spaces, including waterbodies, woodlands, farms, and parks, that can be enjoyed by future generations.
2. Enhance, steward, and restore existing natural resources, open spaces and recreational facilities.
3. Preserve and protect the town's water supply, wildlife, and other natural resources.
4. Provide a system of walking and bicycle trails that connect our open spaces and provide a way to travel throughout the town.
5. Increase awareness, appreciation, and use of the town's open spaces, trails, natural resources, and recreational opportunities.

The goals and objectives culminate into the *Action Plan* (Section 9) which lays out specific projects or actions to undertake to accomplish the goals. The Action Plan is a very important component of the plan and identifies the lead agency for each action, recommends implementation mechanisms, and includes a general schedule for each item. The Action Plan is also mapped.



Natick High School sports. Photo credit: Rec & Parks

SECTION 2 - INTRODUCTION

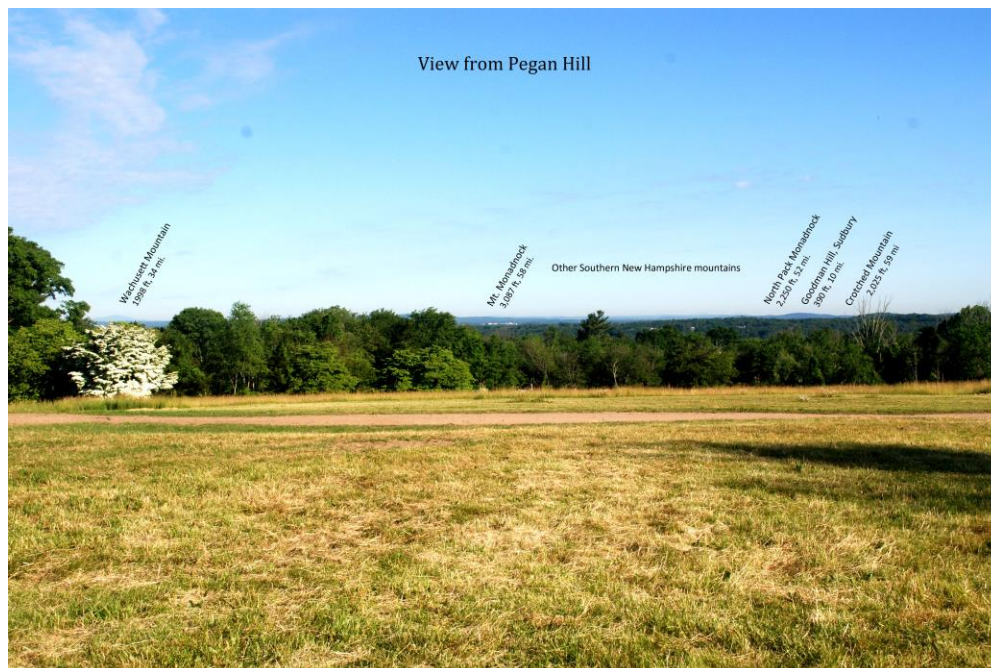
A. Statement of Purpose

This is an update of Natick's most recent Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), which was last updated in 2012 as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to qualify for grants; inventory the community's open space and recreation resources; track accomplishments; and develop a set of goals and objectives for this work. This plan was updated by the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC), a body created by Town Meeting in 2003 with responsibility for ensuring the implementation and updating of the OSRP as required. The committee comprises one representative each from the Recreation and Parks Commission, Conservation Commission, and Planning Board; and four at-large members, appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

The 2012 OSRP Action Plan may be found in **Appendix A**, together with specific accomplishments on the action items. Key accomplishments include the following:

Conservation/Protection

- Private landowners granted two Conservation Restrictions (CRs) both expanding existing CRs. They include: 35 additional acres from the late Morgan Palmer; and five additional acres to the Arnold Hunnewell CR.
- The Natick Planning Board approved the McHugh Farms (Graystone) subdivision which included 50% public open space (more than eight acres) along Cottage Street.
- The Town purchased a CR on a 16-acre parcel at the top of Pegan Hill, enabling the Trustees of Reservations to purchase the parcel and the Dover Land Conservation Trust to purchase an abutting 24-acre parcel.



Pegan Hill views. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

- A large parcel located in the Pickerel Pond area was transferred from the DPW to the Conservation Commission for permanent protection and public trail use.

Active Recreation

- J.J. Lane and adjacent leased land have been redeveloped as recreational space with a playground, community gardens, walking trails, playing fields, and picnic areas.
- Two parks were completely rebuilt: Connor Heffler Park (formerly East Park) and Whitney Field at the Navy Yard (formerly Navy Yard Field).
- Natick's first dog park was designed and built (formal opening is expected summer 2020).



Newly built J.J. Lane Park. Photo credit: Rec & Parks

Administration/Policy

- The Conservation Commission dissolved the Trails Maintenance Committee and Town Forest Committee and established a Trails and Forest Stewardship Committee (TaFS).
- Ongoing progress has been made in ensuring that conservation/recreation lands are being properly recorded at the Registry of Deeds and in Town Assessor records.

Trails

- The Town purchased the CSX railroad right-of-way and started construction of the Cochituate Rail Trail (anticipated to be completed late 2020).
- The McHugh Farms (Graystone) subdivision mentioned earlier was planned to include a trail connecting Rockland and Cottage Streets, and several side trails.
- The Sudbury and Cochituate Aqueducts were permitted for public trail use through an arrangement with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. The Sudbury Aqueduct could be used at the outset. The Cochituate Aqueduct Trail was developed in stages entirely through volunteer efforts and has now been extended through the Pickerel Pond area to the Wethersfield neighborhood.
- Trailhead kiosks and trail markings were completed for several trails.

- Townwide trail maps were updated and distributed, including for the Town Forest and 16 trail areas.



The Cochituate Aqueduct Trail was improved as a trail with the help of many volunteers. Photo credit: Marianne Iarossi



Cochituate Rail Trail groundbreaking. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

B. Planning Process and Public Participation

Over the years as the Town has moved forward with implementation of the OSRP, the OSAC has continuously sought feedback from the public and from town boards, including:

- Visibility: Presence at community-wide events such as Natick Days and Natick Earth Day
- Outreach: Public updates through e-mail lists and social media
- Volunteer activities: Encouraging trail volunteers and organizing trail clean-up days
- Town updates: Annual reports for the Annual Town Report and regular meetings with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Recreation and Parks Commission.

From 2016 to 2019, the Town of Natick undertook the Natick 2030+ process – development of a master plan designed to assess the Town’s existing conditions and determine future needs through a robust public outreach process. A variety of topics were discussed throughout the outreach such as housing, transportation, and economic development. Much of the outreach and discussions specifically surrounded open space, recreation, natural resources, and the environment and included:

- 1 Online Survey targeted at Open Space & Recreation
- 3 Community-wide Public Meetings which included Open Space Resources

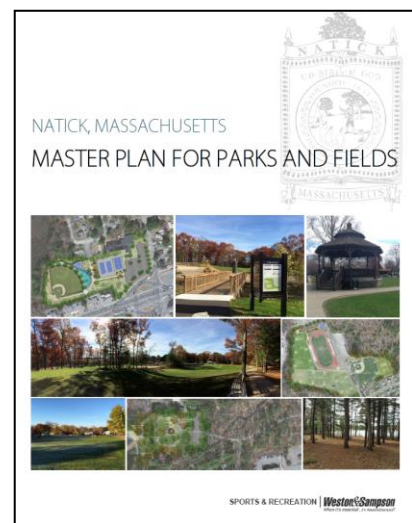
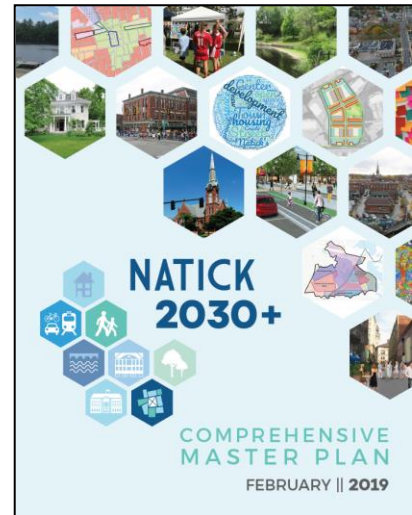
- 1 Roundtable with local Open Space & Natural Resources experts
- Project Website and Social Media
- Other opportunities, including Town Meeting discussions, stakeholder meetings, and local community events

From 2014 to 2016, the Recreation and Parks Department undertook a process to develop the Master Plan for Parks and Fields. The Master Plan for Parks and Fields involved a comprehensive inventory of the Recreation and Parks owned facilities in Town including their existing conditions and proposed improvements. A variety of public meetings were held across six “regions” of Town with feedback culminating into a Needs Assessment and subsequent recommendations. The plan includes conceptual designs for many recreation facilities and a ten-year capital plan.

The large volume of feedback collected from these processes confirmed that the 2012 OSRP vision, community needs, and goals/objectives still ring true today, but also brought to the Town’s attention new issues and opportunities. To supplement this feedback and further gain community input on the 2020 OSRP, additional outreach was conducted for the 2020 OSRP Update in spring 2020.

Due to the State of Emergency surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak and government mandated social distancing protocols, the Town had to be creative in this additional outreach through various methods. Methods included:

- Recorded video presentation streamed online
- Online survey (110 responses received)
- Photo campaign – send us your Natick open space/recreation photos!
- Zoom meeting presentations
 - Earth Week “Tent Talk”
 - Conservation Commission (broadcasted on the Government Channel)
 - Coffee With a Purpose
- Shoutouts at other Zoom meetings (Board of Selectmen, Recreation & Parks Commission, etc.)
- Facebook postings (Town of Natick and many other open space/trail group pages)



- Featured in the Town's Sustainability Newsletter
- Email blasts to residents and stakeholders
- Flyer postings around the community
- Flyer distribution to Environmental Justice neighborhoods

Feedback from the aforementioned processes and the 2020 OSRP outreach was integrated into the 2020 OSRP, especially Section 6 (Community Vision), Section 7 (Analysis of Needs), Section 8 (Goals and Objectives), and Section 9 (Action Plan).

A draft of the entire 2020 OSRP Update plan was distributed widely for public review and comment in June 2020.

Appendix B includes outreach materials.

SECTION 3 - COMMUNITY SETTING

A. Regional Context

Located 17 miles west of Boston, between the Route 128 and I-495 technology corridors in southern Middlesex County, Natick provides a mixture of suburban residential, commercial, and light industrial land use. Local and regional commercial districts are situated along its major highways, reflective of its location within commuting distance of Boston, Worcester, and Providence. Its three major transportation arteries are the Massachusetts Turnpike, Route 9, and the Boston and Albany Railroad, all of which connect Boston with western Massachusetts. Natick owes much of its growth to its location on these major east-west corridors. Routes 27 and 135, major collector roads, cross in the center of town and provide connections to Framingham to the west, Wellesley to the east, Wayland to the north, and Sherborn to the south. Route 16 travels through South Natick, connecting Wellesley and Sherborn. See **Map 1**, Regional Context.

Natick is within the jurisdiction of Boston's Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and participates in regional planning efforts as part of the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (MWRC), a sub-region of MAPC. Natick is a partner of MetroWest LandLine – MAPC's vision to connect the region's greenways and trails into one contiguous network. This is evident in the Town's active construction of the Cochituate Rail Trail, Cochituate Aqueduct Trail, and Sudbury Aqueduct Trail, all of which connect Natick to neighboring towns.

Additionally, this Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is consistent with MAPC's MetroFuture (2008) and MetroCommon 2050 (in progress) plans, especially in its acknowledgment of a robust regional network of natural and recreational resources, in its recommendation for communicating with neighboring Towns to identify potential trails which could cross town borders, and in focusing growth within existing cores with infrastructure.

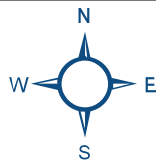
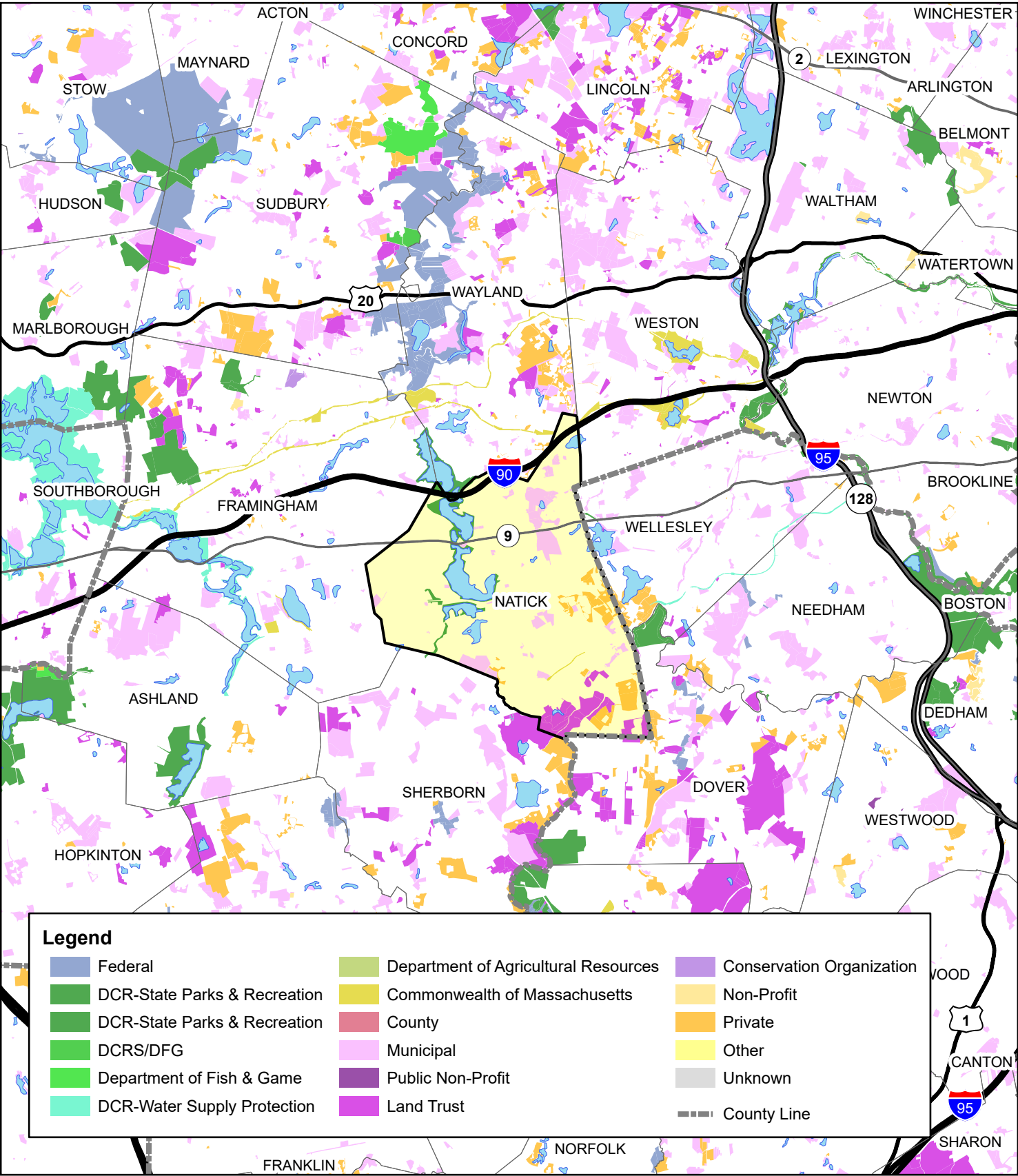
The State Division of Conservation Services has a statewide OSRP called the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2017 (SCORP). Natick's OSRP is consistent with the SCORP in regards to acquiring lands for new open spaces, filling in gaps in the trail network, and supporting and developing amenities and open spaces that are accessible by all including senior citizens, Environmental Justice populations, dog owners, children, and members of the community with limited abilities.

Natick is nestled between the upper basins of the Charles and Sudbury Rivers in Middlesex County and shares the following open spaces with neighboring towns.

- The Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, consists of 735 acres plus another 165 acres under Conservation Restriction (CRs).¹ Most of this area is within Natick, the remainder in Sherborn. It has 9 miles of walking

¹ A Conservation Restriction is a land protection tool that prohibits or limits development on a parcel of land in perpetuity in order to preserve the land for conservation and/or recreation interests.

Map 1 Regional Context

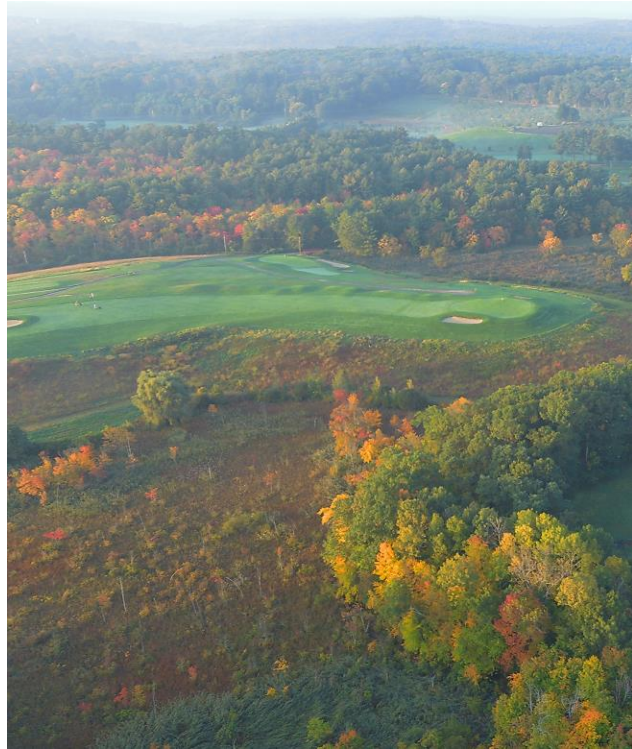


Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



trails through a variety of habitats, as well as a universally accessible trail. It provides a venue for hiking, birdwatching, photography, cross-country skiing and other activities, and offers year-round access.

- Cochituate State Park, managed by the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation, consists of over 1100 acres, including Lake Cochituate itself and the land surrounding the lake. Two of the lake's three "ponds" are located in Natick, while the northern pond lies in Framingham and Wayland.
- The Town of Natick recently collaborated with The Trustees of Reservations, Dover Land Conservation Trust, and New England Forestry Foundation to expand the complex of public reservations spanning Natick and Dover in the Pegan Hill area.
- Morency Woods, a 14.5 acre property that spans Natick and Framingham and is under the control of the Framingham Conservation Commission. There are trail access points from both Natick and Framingham.
- Natick maintains and operates a municipal golf course, Sassamon Trace, on land that is partly in Natick and partly in Sherborn.
- The Cochituate Aqueduct Trail now stretches for 11.6 miles through Newton, Wellesley, and the recently completed 1.3-mile portion in Natick.



Sassamon Trace Golf Course. Photo credit: DPW drone

The Town of Natick sees opportunities and needs for cooperative effort with neighboring towns to preserve and manage a number of current open space projects:

- The Town would like to ensure that there remains continuous open space between Union Street, in Natick, and Lake Waban, in Wellesley, of which portions (nearly 200 acres) are currently protected under CRs.
- With a particular interest in aquifer protection, the Town retains an interest in the protection of Elm Bank in Dover, where one of Natick's town wells is located.

Among abutting towns, Sherborn completed an OSRP update in 2018, Wayland in 2017, Weston in 2017, and Wellesley in 2015. Dover and Framingham are in the process of updating their plans as they have expired or will be in 2020.

B. Natick's History²

The town's original residents were Native Americans. They gave the Town its name, which means "place of hills". Natick Plantation was established in 1651 by English missionary Reverend John Eliot along the Charles River as the first and largest Praying Indian town, which became a model for others in Massachusetts. Reverend Eliot converted them to Christianity and on October 14, 1651 successfully secured a charter from the Legislature granting them two thousand acres of land, part of the original "Dedham grant". The Praying Indian town established their own government based on the English model, held town meetings, and elected their own town selectmen and other officials before the English settled in the town in the 18th century. The 1658 grant of the northwest piece of Dedham enlarged Natick to six thousand acres.

King Philip's War (1675-1677) began with the discovery of the assassination of the Natick Praying Indian John Sassamon. He had learned how to read and write English in Natick and provided much help to the settlers. He was assassinated because he warned the Governor that Philip was making plans against the English. Wampanoag Chief Metacomet (who was called King Philip) went to war against the settlers. As a result, Natick's Praying Indian population was forced to resettle on Deer Island, despite John Eliot's protests and assurances that they posed no threat. Most of Natick's Indians perished from the cold and lack of food and medical care while on Deer Island. They returned to Natick in diminished numbers. After John Eliot died in 1690, an Indian named Daniel Takawampait, an ordained Puritan Minister, became their leader until his death in 1716.

When English settlers began migrating to what is today Natick center, they rebelled at having to travel to and support the church in South Natick. The resulting "Meeting House Dispute" was resolved by a successful petition to the General Court in 1761, attaching northern Natick to Needham. This "Needham Leg" extended west to Lake Cochituate and included downtown and all but a sliver of land at Natick's northern boundary. In 1781, Natick was incorporated as a town and in 1797 the "Needham Leg" was restored to Natick.

During the colonial and early Federal period Natick was predominately agricultural, with numerous orchards and lumber, grist and other mills. In 1806, the Boston-Worcester Turnpike was established as a toll road. This route is the present day Route 9. In 1835, the Boston and Albany Railroad was built through Natick, causing rapid industrial expansion. Natick's growing shoe industry became the third largest shoe production community in the country, with 23 shoe

² The major source for information on Natick history is Michael J. Crawford, *History of Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1976* (Natick Historical Commission, 1978).

manufacturers by 1880. In 1858, the H.H. Harwood Baseball factory, another “cottage industry”, began producing the first center-wound balls with figure-eight-stitched horsehide covers, setting the standard for baseballs and producing Official League Baseballs.

In 1874, a major fire destroyed almost all of the buildings in Natick Center. The wooden buildings were replaced with predominantly three-story brick buildings. That, and the depression of the railroad tracks below street level in 1894, dramatically changed Natick’s appearance, and created one of the few wholly Victorian town centers in eastern Massachusetts.

Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, may have had as its inspiration Natick’s reputation as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Natick’s Henry Wilson, Vice President from 1873-1876 under Ulysses S. Grant, was an abolitionist, and wrote the 3-volume “History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America” (1872-77), the final volume of which was published posthumously by his estate. Walnut Hill School, now a school for artistically gifted students, was established as a girls’ school in 1893 on the site of the Harwood estate, and today attracts students from around the world.

Natick experienced rapid population growth in the 1880s, with immigrants from Ireland, England, Nova Scotia, Italy, and Albania. By the beginning of the 20th Century, the shoe industry was declining, and Natick slowly changed from a major manufacturing town to a commuter suburb of Boston. Natick at one time boasted an airfield and an automobile factory, and Natick was widely known for its greenhouses for the first decades of the 20th century.

The population increased dramatically after World War II, with the economic stimulus of new high technology firms (Natick Labs) developing within Natick itself, and, to a greater extent, within an easy commute along Route 128 and Route 495. The establishment of two commuter-rail stops in Natick Center and West Natick provided easy public transportation to Boston. In the 20-year period between 1940 and 1960, Natick’s population more than doubled, from 13,851 to 28,831, and it reached 31,057 by 1970. The “baby bust” dip in the birth rate during the late 1970s and early 1980s contributed to a significant decrease in the number of people per household and the population declined to 29,461 in 1980. Since 1980, the population has risen slowly as demonstrated in the following section.

C. Population Characteristics

1. Population Growth

As the below table indicates, population growth has been slow and steady from 1990 through 2010. The 2017 population estimates show a boost in population growth. The upcoming decennial census occurring in 2020 will confirm whether this growth is realistic. If it is, this points to the need to create more open space and recreational resources for a growing population.

**TABLE 3-1
POPULATION GROWTH 1990-2017**

	Population	Percent Change	Annual Growth Rate*
1990	30,510	3.6%	.35%
2000	32,170	5.4%	.53%
2010	33,006	2.6%	.26%
2017	35,957	8.9%	1.17%

Source: 1990, 2000, and 2010 U.S. Census

2017 U.S. Census, 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

*Calculated by authors

The 2010 U.S Census showed a total of 14,121 housing units, of which 13,406 were occupied. It indicated 13,406 households with an average household size of 2.44.

2. Ethnicity

The next table indicates the ethnicity of Natick's population in 2000, 2010, and 2017. The predominant race in 2010 was white, with 87.3 percent of the population, followed by a small, but growing Asian population (7.2 percent, up from 3.9 percent in 2000). The remaining population is black (2.1 percent), American Indian (0.1 percent), other (1.2 percent), and two or more races (2.0 percent). Hispanics constituted 3 percent of the population. Trends in the 2017 estimates indicate continuing growth in the Asian and Hispanic populations.

**TABLE 3-2
ETHNICITY, 2000-2017**

Race	2000	2010	2017
White	92.0%	87.3%	82.9%
Black/African-American	1.6%	2.1%	1.8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Asian	3.9%	7.2%	12.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.8%	1.2%	1.3%
Two or more races	1.6%	2.0%	1.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	2.0%	3.0%	3.9%

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census

2017 U.S. Census, 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

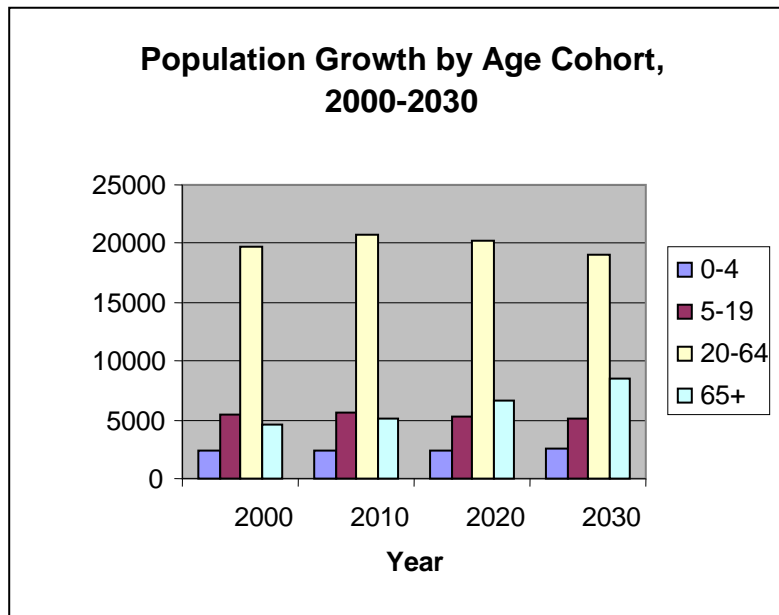
3. Age

The next table presents the actual 2000 population by age cohort as well as projections to 2030. The table indicates that children 5-19 years of age, which increased from 4,713 in 1990 to 5,448 in 2000, reach a peak of 5,650 in 2010 then fall slowly to 5,215 in 2020 and 5,130 in 2030. These demographics may explain the rapidly increasing use of the town's recreation fields in recent years.

**TABLE 3-3
POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2010, 2020 AND 2030 BY AGE COHORT**

AGE GROUP	2000	2010	2020	2030
0-4	2370	2388	2440	2496
5-9	2124	2073	1948	2009
10-14	1903	1890	1742	1719
15-19	1421	1687	1525	1402
5-19	5448	5650	5215	5130
20-24	1219	1610	1496	1319
25-29	2076	1872	2037	1833
30-34	2905	2175	2392	2272
35-39	3198	2603	2405	2690
40-44	2860	2839	2297	2524
45-49	2476	2972	2444	2252
50-54	2056	2277	2014	1522
55-59	1619	2269	2600	2182
60-64	1335	2117	2588	2466
20-64	19,744	20,734	20,273	19,060
65-69	1159	1519	2105	2425
70-74	1191	1199	1941	2386
75-79	990	956	1230	1712
80-85	660	755	740	1206
85+	608	631	635	724
65+	4608	5060	6651	8453
TOTAL	32,170	33,833	34,579	35,139

Source: MAPC, 2006



The median age of Natick’s population is steadily increasing. Also, as the above chart illustrates, while the 0-4, 5-19 and 20-64 population is projected to remain relatively steady through 2030, the 65+ cohort, which has risen from 3,984 in 1990 to 4,608 in 2000, continues to increase steadily to 5,060 in 2010, and then increases dramatically to 6,651 in 2020 and then to 8,453 by 2030. This may explain the growing interest in accessible trails and other forms of “passive” recreation.

4. Income

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Natick’s per capita income in 1999 was \$36,358, median household income was \$69,755 and median family income was \$85,715. As shown in the following table, by 2017, the American Community Survey estimated that these figures had increased significantly. The estimated U.S. per capita income in 2017 was \$54,488, while median household and family incomes were \$106,027 and \$140,837 respectively. High income levels demonstrate a need to promote outdoor activity by residents as more and more studies show a correlation between improved mental health (which could be affiliated with working residents) and spending time in nature.

TABLE 3-4
INCOME, 2000-2017

	2000	2010	2017
Per Capita Income	\$36,358	\$46,613	\$54,488
Median Household³ Income	\$69,755	\$88,311	\$106,027
Median Family⁴ Income	\$85,715	\$111,449	\$140,837

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

2010 U.S. Census ACS 3-Year Estimates

2017 U.S. Census, 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

5. Employment Trends

Natick is an economically vibrant community, with a low unemployment rate and is known as a business-friendly community. As a testament to the desirability of Natick, many major employers have chosen to locate their world or national headquarters in Natick, including Cognex, MathWorks, and Boston Scientific, among others.

This corporate presence may account for Natick's lower unemployment rate, historically lower than the statewide rate. In November 2019, the unemployment rate in Natick was 1.7%, compared with the statewide rate of 2.3%. During this same time, Natick's total labor force was 21,178.⁵ The average weekly wage increased from \$1,178 in 2010 to \$1,357 in 2018. The largest sector in 2018 was Service-Providing with an average monthly employment of 22,203, followed by Retail Trade (5,602), and Professional and Technical Services (2,909).⁶ As stated earlier when considering income levels, low unemployment rates and increased wages are positive economic factors but demonstrate a need to promote use of outdoor amenities by residents in order to help improve mental health.

6. Environmental Justice

Natick contains one Block Group meeting one of the three criteria for an Environmental Justice area due to its minority population. The area is located on the west edge of Town with Route 135 as the northern border, the Framingham Town line as the western border, the Framingham/Sherborn Town line as the southern border, and generally Newfield Drive and Walden Drive as the eastern border. The neighborhood contains fairly dense multi-family housing such as Kendall Crossing Apartments and Natick Village Apartments.

³ A household includes all people who occupy a housing unit.

⁴ A family is two or more people related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together.

⁵ Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) Labor Force & Unemployment Data – November 2019

⁶ EOLWD Employment and Wages Report (ES-202) – 2010 and 2018 Annual Report

Open space and recreation areas are located nearby to this neighborhood but improved connectivity to them is important to address. Additionally, water quality in Lake Cochituate has become an important environmental equity issue due to low income and non-English speaking visitors fishing in the lake and using the fish as part of their regular diets.

D. Growth and Development Patterns

1. Patterns and Trends

In the mid-17th century Natick was settled along the Charles River, in what is now South Natick. In the 19th century, technological advancements gradually shifted Natick, and Massachusetts, from agricultural to industrial economies. The town's geography was dramatically changed in 1835, when the railroad connecting Boston and Worcester was built through the geographical center of town. The area around the train station became known as Natick Center, which quickly surpassed South Natick in population and economic activity. The railroad made Natick Center an ideal site for new factories, and workers' housing quickly developed nearby. The railroad opened up national markets for Natick industries, particularly shoe manufacturing. South Natick also experienced some of this type of growth, but to a lesser extent. By the late 1800s Natick was two distinct communities – Natick and South Natick, with large swathes of abandoned farmland in East and West Natick reverting back to woodlands. Between 1800 and 1900, as Natick urbanized, its population increased tenfold, from about 900 to 9,000, with nearly 2,000 people employed in manufacturing, and only 123 in agriculture.

In the 20th century, as manufacturing declined during the Great Depression, Natick became a bedroom community of Boston. In the 1930s, Route 9 was built as the state's first divided highway, following the route of the 19th century turnpike and allowing easy automobile access from Natick to Boston or to Worcester. By 1950, two-thirds of Natick's full-time workers were employed outside of Natick, including Boston. Workers could live in Natick Center and commute to work by train or car. In 1957, the Massachusetts Turnpike was constructed along the old aqueduct right-of-way, with Exit 13 at the Natick-Framingham border. The Turnpike, along with the existing Route 9, gave commuters access to Boston, as well as new high technology businesses located along Route 128 to the east and Route 495 to the west.

Following the Second World War, housing for the returning soldiers and their families was built in East Natick, North Natick (known as Wethersfield), and West Natick. These areas have retained their suburban neighborhood character and relative affordability, and they continue to be sought out by young families. However, these neighborhoods today are threatened by tear downs and being replaced with larger homes. During this time, Route 9 became a regional commercial center. In 1951, Shoppers World was built, just across the Framingham line, as New England's first regional shopping center, followed by the Natick Mall and Sherwood Plaza in the 1960s. The housing and commercial developments during this period used up the majority of buildable land in the central and northern parts of town. Only South Natick escaped this round of development, primarily because it was less accessible to major transportation routes.

The area within walking distance of the West Natick train station experienced another building boom in the early 1970s and '80s. A large residential subdivision was built on the site of a former golf course on the northern side of Route 135. Large condominium and apartment complexes such as Natick Green and Natick Village – Natick's first experiment with cluster zoning – were built on the south side of Route 135. This is where some of Natick's highest population density is located and where there has been little accommodation for publicly accessible open space.

Route 9's commercial development in Natick and Framingham, which began with Shopper's World, expanded into what is known as the "Golden Triangle," an area defined by Route 9, Route 30, and Speen Street, although the commercial activity extends considerably beyond these streets. Although the vacant land in this area is long gone, the density of activity continues to increase, as single-story structures and parking lots have been largely replaced by retail and office buildings with associated parking garages. The Golden Triangle continues to be one of the most desirable locations for office buildings and retail space in Metrowest. New condominium projects at the Natick Mall and near the Cloverleaf Shopping Plaza in the early 2000's marked the first residential development in this area since the 18th Century. Additional recent apartment development in the Cloverleaf and Speen Street "Beetle Back" districts has boosted the Triangle's housing stock to nearly a thousand dwellings. The new residential population creates new demand for neighborhood-scale retail, park and recreation spaces as well as pedestrian amenities, particularly for crossing Speen Street between the Natick Mall and Cloverleaf Centers.

During the 1990s and into the new millennium, substantial subdivision development has occurred wherever available land could be acquired, consuming a significant amount of woodland and open space. In 1971, land classified as residential occupied 4,051 acres (40% of Natick's total land area), and by 2016 this amount had increased to 4,790 acres (47%). Agricultural land declined by 162 acres (30%) between 1971 and 1999 and by an additional 128 acres (35%) between 2000 and 2016. Land classified as recreation increased by 773 acres (410%) between 1971 and 2016.

During the 1971-1999 period, land classified as urban development (residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, transportation) increased by 798 acres (15.1%). The largest increase was in land classified as residential, which increased by 708 acres. Between 1999 and 2016, land classified as urban development increased by 1,064 acres (17%). The amount of land classified as residential increased by only 1%, while the amount of land classified as commercial (includes both office and retail) increased by 13.5%. The largest increase was in land classified as public or institutional use which increased by 274 acres (78%).

The 1970 population occupied about 0.13 acres per person (dividing the total acreage classified as residential by the 1970 population of 31,057), but, as individual lot sizes grew, an additional 0.64 acres per person were developed to accommodate the additional 1,113 persons added to the population between 1970 and 2000. Although there is still development of single family homes

on large lots, much of the recent residential development has been in multi-family developments, reducing the amount of land per person. The 2014 population of 34,230 (source: American Community Survey estimate) occupied approximately 0.14 acres per person. In 1971, multi-family residential represented 2.5% of all residential land use (by acreage). Today it represents 17%.⁷

⁷ The 1970 to 2016 analysis comes from the Natick 2030+ Comprehensive Master Plan (February 2019), Chapter 3 and Table 3-5 in this OSRP.

TABLE 3-5
LAND USE CHANGES, 1971-1999

LAND USE	1971	1985	CHANGE 1971-1985		1999	CHANGE 1985-1999		CHANGE 1971-1999	
TYPE	ACRES	ACRES	ACRES	PERCENT	ACRES	ACRES	PERCENT	ACRES	PERCENT
Crop Land (Ac)	230.8	201.4	-29.4	-12.74%	186.9	-14.5	-7.20%	-43.9	-19.02%
Pasture (Ap)	193.7	167.5	-26.2	-13.53%	113.2	-54.3	-32.42%	-80.5	-41.56%
Perennial	105.9	103.9	-2	-1.89%	68.4	-35.5	-34.17%	-37.5	-35.41%
TOTAL AGRICULTURE	530.4	472.8	-57.6	-10.86%	368.4	-104.4	-22.08%	-162	-30.54%
			0						
FORESTLAND (F)	3004.1	2794.8	-209.3	-6.97%	2484.2	-310.6	-11.11%	-519.9	-17.31%
OPEN LAND (O)	202.7	196.3	-6.4	-3.16%	167.3	-29	-14.77%	-35.4	-17.46%
Participation Recreation (Rp)	183.8	134.6	-49.2	-26.77%	123.4	-11.2	-8.32%	-60.4	-32.86%
Spectator Recreation (Rs)	4.5	3.9	-0.6	-13.33%	3.9	0	0.00%	-0.6	-13.33%
TOTAL RECREATION	188.3	138.5	-49.8	-26.45%	127.3	-11.2	-8.09%	-61	-32.40%
			0						
Commercial (Uc)	541.6	588.6	47	8.68%	605.0	16.4	2.79%	63.4	11.71%
Industrial (Ui)	138.7	156.8	18.1	13.05%	161.4	4.6	2.93%	22.7	16.37%
Mining (M)	16.0	16.0	0	0.00%	16.3	0.3	1.88%	0.3	1.88%
Public or Transitional	350.9	336.7	-14.2	-4.05%	351.6	14.9	4.43%	0.7	0.20%
Multiple Residential	100.2	201.7	101.5	101.30%	203.9	2.2	1.09%	103.7	103.49%
High Density Residential (R1) ¹	579.6	580.2	0.6	0.10%	580.2	0	0.00%	0.6	0.10%
Med. Density Residential (R2) ²	2520.8	2579.6	58.8	2.33%	2928.0	348.4	13.51%	407.2	16.15%
Low Density Residential (R3) ³	850.3	969.8	119.5	14.05%	1047.4	77.6	8.00%	197.1	23.18%
Transportation (Ut)	140.7	140.7	0	0.00%	143.0	2.3	1.63%	2.3	1.63%
Waste Disposal (Uw)	55.3	55.3	0	0.00%	55.3	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
TOTAL URBAN	5294.1	5625.4	331.3	6.26%	6091.9	466.5	8.29%	797.8	15.07%
			0						
Inland Wetland (Fw)	398.0	389.8	-8.2	-2.06%	378.4	-11.4	-2.92%	-19.6	-4.92%
Water (W)	608.1	608.1	0	0.00%	608.1	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
TOTAL WATER	1006.1	998.0	-8.1	-0.81%	986.5	-11.5	-1.15%	-19.6	-1.95%
TOTAL AREA	10,225.8	10,225.8			10,225.8				

Source: University of Massachusetts Resource Mapping Project

¹Lot of less than ¼ acre. ²Lot sizes of ¼ to ½ acre. ³Lot sizes of more than ½ acre.

2. Infrastructure

a. Transportation System

Natick is served by multiple transportation modes including major highway systems (Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 9), local and collector systems (Routes 135, 27, and 16), and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) rail system. In Natick, these facilities have the effect of dividing the town, including major open space areas like Cochituate State Park, and inhibiting the development of bicycle and pedestrian connections across them.

Interstate Routes 95 (state Route 128) and 495 divide the region into transportation corridors connected by numerous “spokes” providing access to Worcester (25 miles), Boston (18 miles) and Providence, R.I. (35 miles), numerous inter-state train and bus facilities, and six airports within 40 miles (Boston, Manchester, N.H., Bedford, Worcester, Providence, and Norwood).

The MBTA commuter-rail passenger service to Boston and Worcester is one of the fastest growing commuter rail lines in the Boston Metropolitan area. Natick is also a member community of the Metrowest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) system, which provides four routes with stops in Natick: one route terminates at the Riverside station on the Green Line, while a second provides hourly service to Natick Mall, both commuter rail stations, and key shopping areas. The Natick commuter shuttle route services the Natick Center train station and a number of major employers.

Anecdotally, an increasing number of Natick residents are using Natick’s roads to commute both short- and long-distance by bicycle. The Town of Natick and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) have contracted with MAS Builders Inc. to construct the Cochituate Rail Trail, a 2.4 mile shared use path that will extend from the Natick Center commuter line north to the Framingham Town Line at Route 30. It is anticipated that this pedestrian and bicycle link to Framingham’s Saxonville neighborhood and recreational/office/shopping attractions will encourage and promote pedestrian and bicycle travel all over the Town and will spur additional bicycle/sidewalk accommodations as the demand for connectivity is prioritized and managed.

The Town of Natick has been steadily including arterial roadways in the Town’s capital improvement program. Recent roadway reconstructions have included Pine Street, Cottage Street, Glen Street, and Oak Street. Major roadways which are currently slated for the 2020 project season include Washington Avenue and South Main Street from the Sherborn Town Line to Natick Center. MassDOT is also currently accepting bids for the North Main Street Reconstruction project from the Wayland Town line to Natick Center. It is anticipated that construction will not begin in earnest until 2021. All of these reconstruction projects include access ramp improvements, sidewalks, and better accommodation for cyclists on the roadways.

On March 23, 2015, the Town of Natick adopted a Complete Streets Policy committing to constructing roadways for all modes of transportation and all users regardless of age and ability. The Policy was ranked Number 7 in the nation in 2015 by Smart Growth America’s National

Complete Streets Coalition. The Town has since received more than \$600,000 in MassDOT funding for roadway improvements to create “complete streets”.

b. Water Supply System

Natick currently draws its water from a Town public water supply system of several wells, two reservoirs, and a distribution system of water mains. Town groundwater resources are protected through the town’s Aquifer Protection District (APD) Bylaw. Projects proposed within this district must comply with the Bylaw and receive a Special Permit through the Planning Board.

c. Sewer Service

Natick sewer collection system is tied into the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) sewer extension, which carries the waste to a treatment facility at Deer Island in Boston Harbor. Many homes depend on septic systems and have not tied into the public sewer system. Properly designed and maintained septic systems help “keep water local”. As home additions and new home construction continues, the Town Health Department and Conservation Commission urge residents to connect to the municipal sewer system. The Natick Water/Sewer Division continues sewer system upgrades and repairs to limit water inflow and infiltration.

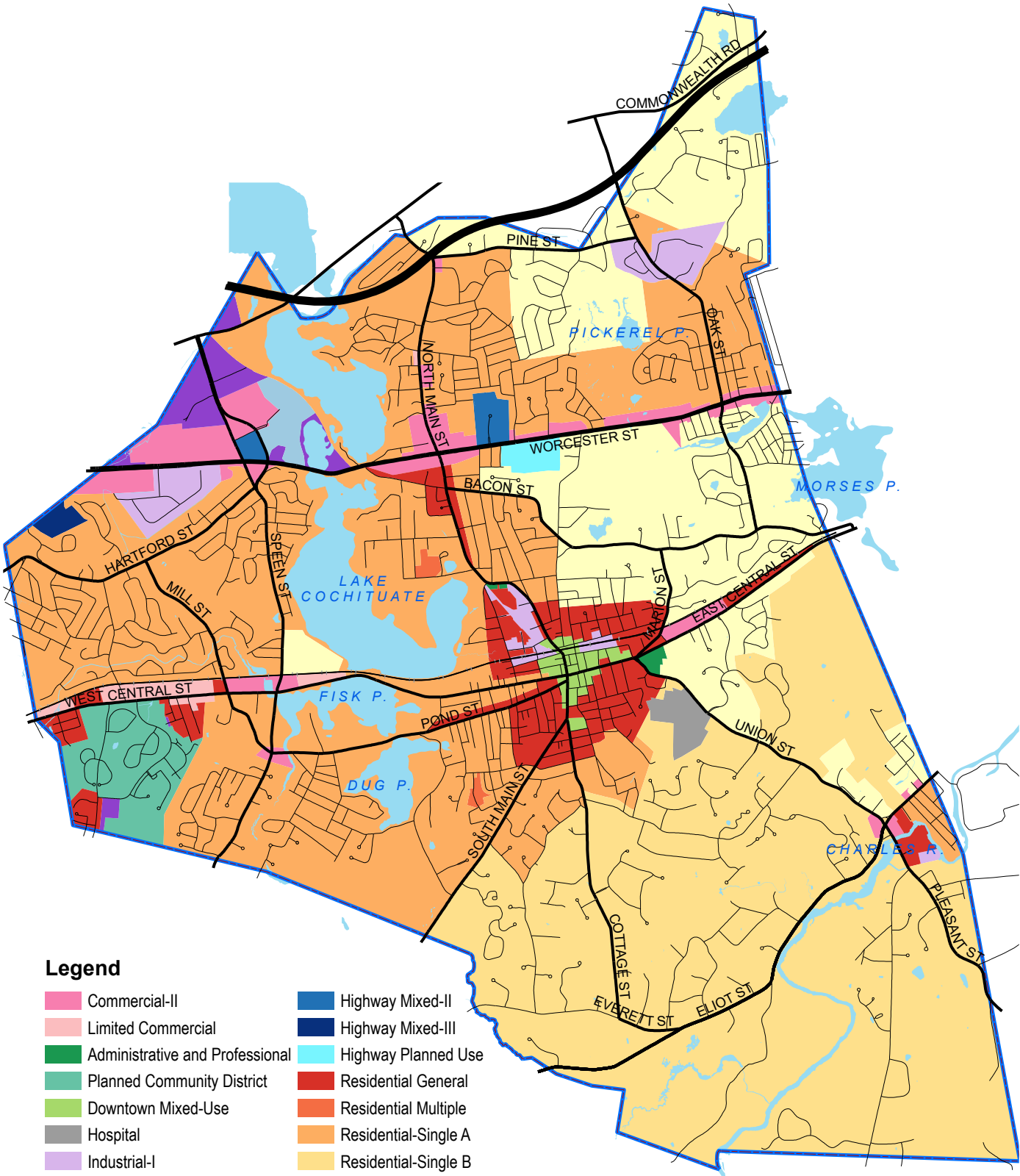
3. Long Term Development Patterns

Natick’s zoning map is attached as **Map 2**. Until the early 1980’s, most of Natick’s single-family housing was built in areas with zoning requirements ranging from 12,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet. Beginning in the 1990s, the most significant land development has taken place in South Natick with residential zoning requirements of 40,000 square feet. As noted above, using more land per person for residential development results in greater loss of open space. This has been mitigated to some degree as some of these subdivisions have developed under the “Single Family Residential Cluster Bylaw”, which allow a greater number of total units, in exchange for leaving 30 to 50 percent of the total land area as preserved open space.

While single-family developments have had the biggest impact on land use, the greatest number of new housing units in the 2000s has been provided by multi-family dwellings. The largest of these are in the “Golden Triangle” area. These areas were generally already used for industrial or commercial activities, so there has been little impact on open space – but there has been a big impact on population. Because these parts of town have little open space or recreational facilities, there is a need to provide more of these resources for the new residents. In addition, there are long-standing dense neighborhoods in the areas that ring Natick Center, including townhouses and multi-unit residential buildings. Over the next few years, we should expect to plan for additional open space needs in Natick Center and other dense areas of town, where future developments that include additional multi-family housing are now being planned.

Natick’s commercial and industrial zoning is concentrated in two parts of town. The “Golden Triangle” area is zoned for commercial or industrial uses with additional commercial zoning along Route 9 to the Wellesley border. Route 9 continues to be a prime location for a number of

Map 2 Zoning Map



Legend

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Commercial-II | Highway Mixed-II |
| Limited Commercial | Highway Mixed-III |
| Administrative and Professional | Highway Planned Use |
| Planned Community District | Residential General |
| Downtown Mixed-Use | Residential Multiple |
| Hospital | Residential-Single A |
| Industrial-I | Residential-Single B |
| Industrial-II | Residential-Single C |
| Highway Mixed-I | |



prominent and sizable commercial businesses. The expanded Natick Mall is now the largest mall in New England.

The second area is Natick Center, which constitutes a “Downtown Mixed Use District.” This zoning allows a mixture of uses, including single and multi-unit residential, commercial, and offices. Additionally, on the downtown’s north edge are two small industrial zones, in which lie some of the remaining brick factory buildings from Natick’s industrial past. Most of these have been converted or permitted for high density residential uses through the use of overlay districts that ring the Downtown Mixed Use zoning district.

In recent years, there has been more neighborhood activism and more efforts by Town boards to improve and increase walkability, and preserve some of the open spaces that neighborhoods have enjoyed for decades. New projects could continue to deplete the amount of available open space, particularly interconnecting greenways necessary for biodiversity. Natick’s Planning Board and Conservation Commission and their staff work with developers to preserve interconnecting stretches of open space and trail connections.

In 2000 and 2002, the Town adopted a series of cluster development bylaws as a means to preserve open space. In 2020, the Town is amending the “Single Family Residential Cluster Bylaw” by lowering the minimum parcel size to be eligible for developments under this Bylaw. The goal is to preserve more open space as the Town witnesses smaller parcels being developed for residential subdivisions.

The Town has also been proactive in encouraging higher density development downtown. In 2004, Town Meeting adopted a Housing Overlay Option Plan (HOOP) overlay zoning district. This provision, which provides two overlay districts in primarily industrial zones in Natick Center, allows more intensive housing development provided that a minimum of 15% of the resulting units are affordable along with certain other requirements. The HOOP includes incentives for the creation of open space. In 2006, Town Meeting created a Smart Growth Overlay (SGO) 40R district. The first 40R housing project, Modera Natick Center, located on the former site of a paper reprocessing facility known as “Natick Paperboard,” have resulted in 150 dwellings constructed on site with 35% of acreage conserved for open space.

According to the *Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest* (Section 5 of this Plan), Natick has several categories of land that might be developed.

- The most likely to be developed is privately owned land with no protection.
- There has been recent investment and interest in Natick Center with zoning amendments creating a neighborhood friendlier for mixed use and lower parking requirements.
- The town contains a considerable amount of privately owned land with minimal protection – land that might not be protected in the future (e.g. Chapter 61 parcels). Finally there are major parcels of land used by the town, state or federal government that might be declared surplus property at some point.

SECTION 4 - ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

A. Geology, Soils and Topography

1. Essential Structure

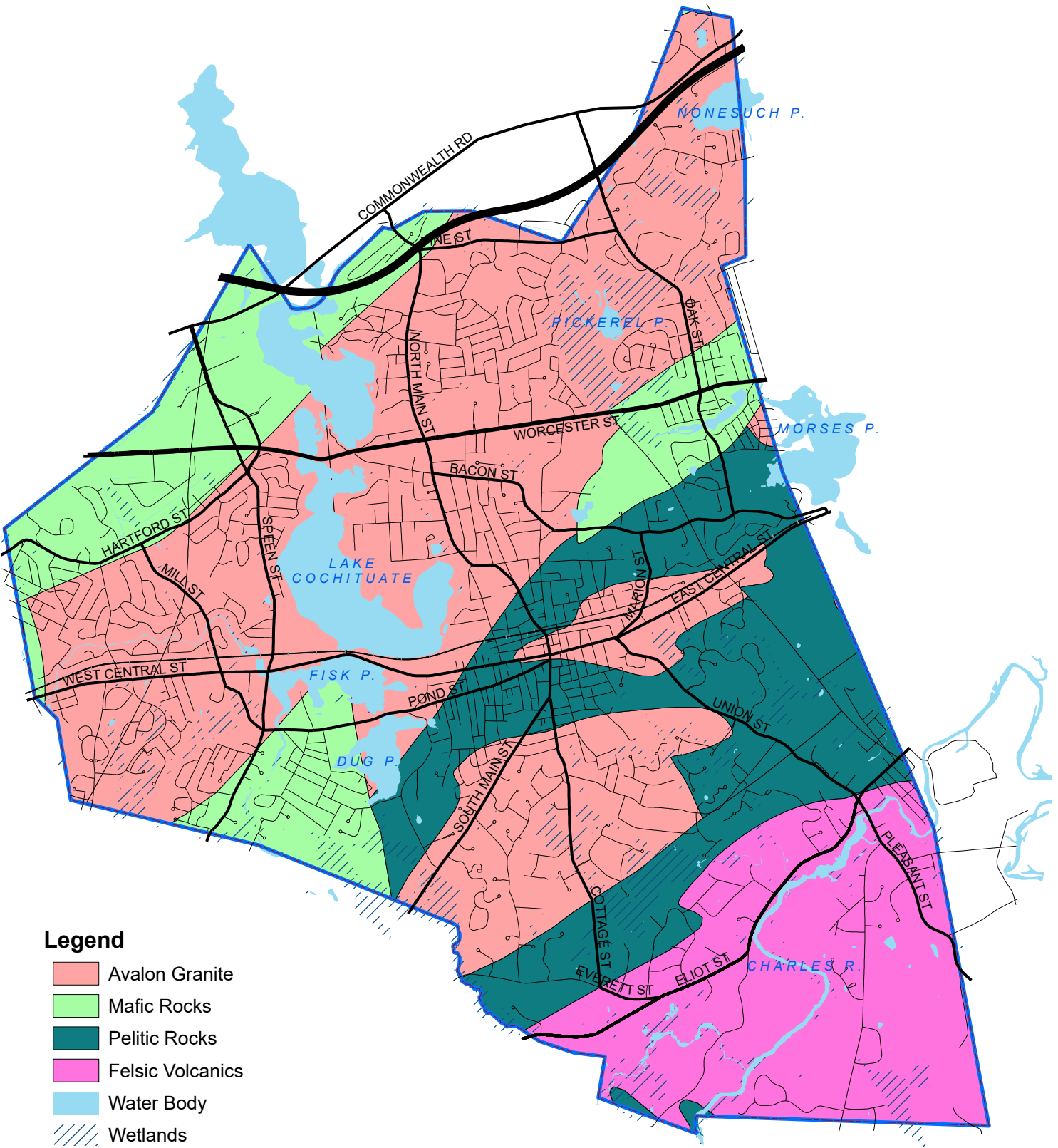
Natick is dominated by low elevation terrain, which is generally less than 200 feet above mean sea level. The major high and low points in town vary from the broad, dominant slopes of Pleasant Hill, Carver Hill, and Drury Hill to the low, rolling areas of Natick Center and West Natick. Elevations range from roughly 110 feet along the Charles River to 410 feet at Pegan Hill, the highest point in Natick. From Pegan Hill, a series of four hills with elevations of 300 feet or greater run along the eastern side of the town up to Route 9. These hills include Carver Hill (300 feet), Broad Hill (312 feet), Train Hill (300 feet), and Pleasant Hill (313 feet). Drury Hill and Tom Hill (both with elevations of 300 feet) are the only dominant slopes in western Natick.

Most of the underlying bedrock in Natick is covered by surficial deposits, although bedrock outcrops are common. The largest area of rock outcrops occurs in the region between Indian Brook, Dug Pond, Everett Hill, and Davis Brook. Stratified deposits of well compacted glacial till are the dominant geologic feature in both the Charles River and Sudbury River watersheds.

A large preglacial valley is carved into the bedrock between the Sunkaway, Morse's Pond, Coolidge Hill, Indian Brook, and the Charles River. The till deposits in this area are generally less than 20 feet thick and are composed of gravel and sands with some clay combined in a poorly sorted mixture. Several of the town's water supply wells are located in this large, water-bearing region. **Map 3** presents Natick's Bedrock Lithology.

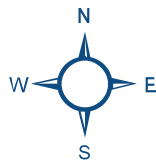
Natick is covered by a variety of glacial soils. The soils are generally mixed glacial drift on the drumlin hills (i.e., Pleasant Hill, Broad Hill, Carver Hill, and Tom Hill); sandy to rocky soils on the outwash areas (i.e., the gravel pit on Oak Street, Little County Road, and the U.S. Army Natick Labs area); and peats and organic mucks in the wetland areas (i.e., the Sunkaway, Davis Brook, and Indian Brook drainage). Covering almost half of Natick are well-drained, permeable, and usually stone-free Hinckley soils, which have good agricultural potential and can produce large volumes of water from deep wells, but can also easily absorb sewage effluent. Their coarse substratum provides little filtering action and the water in wells can be polluted if located near a source of contamination. See **Map 4** (General Soils) and the below table.

Map 3 Bedrock Lithology



Legend

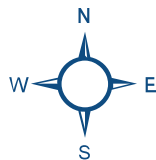
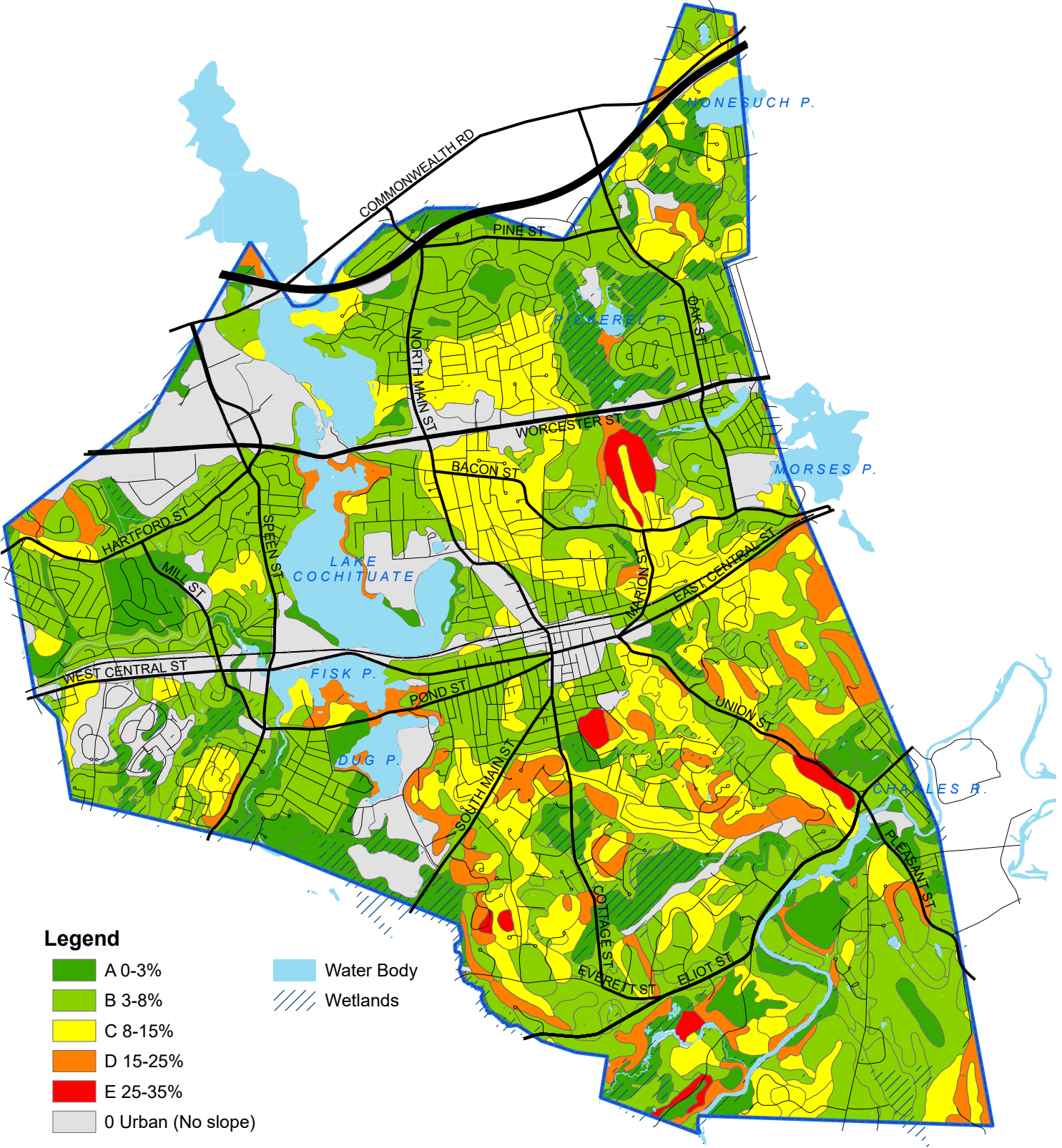
- Avalon Granite
- Mafic Rocks
- Pelitic Rocks
- Felsic Volcanics
- Water Body
- Wetlands



Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



Map 4 General Soils Map



Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



**TABLE 4-1
GENERAL SOIL ASSOCIATIONS**

	Acres	Percentage
Hinckley-Made Land Association	4,704	46
Woodbridge-Paxton Association	2,050	20
Hollis Association	1,740	17
Windsor-Deerfield Association	810	8
Muck Association	480	5
Canton-Muck Association	450	4
TOTAL	10,234	100

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture-Soil Conservation Service

Natick (from an Algonkian word sometimes interpreted as "Place of Hills") is typical New England 'swamps and drumlins'. Its establishment as a town prior to the Revolutionary War meant that the population settlement was on prime land along the river, until the railroad came through, taking the (flattest) path of least resistance. Natick was a farming and manufacturing town until after World War II, when, due largely to its proximity to Boston and excellent rail access, most of the farmland was converted into housing. This farmland included most of the flat, well drained land that would be appropriate for active recreation, e.g., fields for soccer, baseball, etc. Fortunately, concurrent with the increase in housing was an increase in land set aside for schools, including ball fields and playgrounds. Due to the town's fairly high level of development, most of the land now available in Natick for any increases in 'active' recreation consists of that set-aside land, including property remaining after the reassignment (e.g., Cole Elementary School to Cole Recreation Center) or demolition (e.g., Murphy Elementary School) of those post-war schools built for the Baby Boomer population growth. Other available property suitable for active recreation generally has various difficulties, such as the Morency Woods area (former sewer beds on the Framingham line).



Eisenmenger Trail named after long-time trail advocate Bob Eisenmenger. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

Passive recreation opportunities abound, particularly with the very active Planning Board encouragement since the 1970's for developers to include open space, and specifically trails, in their developments. This was recognized several years ago when the still-incomplete trail system between South Natick and Natick Center was named the Eisenmenger Trail, after long-time Planning Board member and trail advocate Bob Eisenmenger. This focus on passive recreational

opportunities continues, with the J.J. Lane Park improvements, the ongoing construction of the Cochituate Rail Trail, and the Planning Board's continuing focus on the creation of trails.

2. Effects on Development, Drinking Water and Wastewater

Natick relies on groundwater for its drinking supplies. Glacial soils provide the primary medium by which the aquifers are recharged. The aquifers that serve as Natick's primary source of drinking water need to be protected. Because Natick is on the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) wastewater system, future development will be tied into that system. While this will not contribute to problems because of septic systems, it will continue the drawdown and removal of water from Natick aquifers through the MWRA system, possibly contributing to future shortages of water.

Since Natick does have a municipal water supply and a municipal sewer system, the impacts of soils, geology and topography are minimized compared to towns that do not have such municipal systems. However, Natick is nearly built out, so the remaining land is more marginal with more issues to be addressed as it is developed.

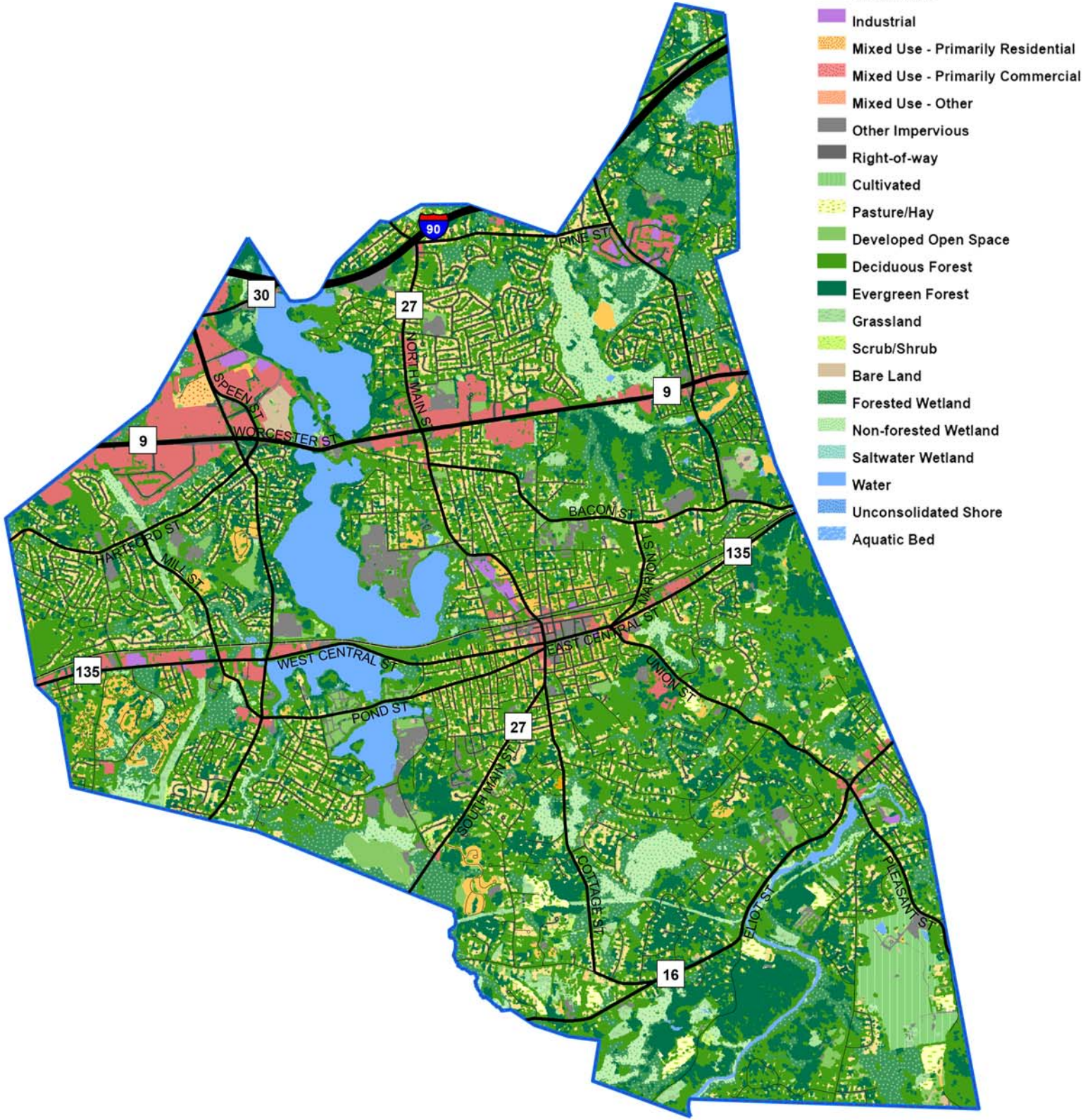
B. Landscape Character

Natick has a great variety of landscapes. It has high-density "urban" areas in Natick Center and "suburban" areas such as the commercial corridors along Route 9 as well as forests, hills, river valleys, etc. (including several lakes, ponds, rivers and streams), and open agricultural lands. **Map 5** illustrates the various land uses in Natick. Natick has many lakes, covering 621 acres, which form a necklace of water running from Lake Cochituate in the north to Dug Pond in the south. A 10-minute walk could take you from the frenetic activity of the Natick Mall to the shores of Lake Cochituate, where fishermen, boaters and bathers peacefully co-exist in their recreational pursuits.

The 100-acre Hunnewell Town Forest descends from Walnut Hill to Route 9 at the Sunkaway. The Sassamon Trace Golf Course, on Route 27 and West Street, abuts a large expanse of Sherborn open space and the Natick High School recreational fields. Across West Street are Timothy Coolidge Hill and an additional ball field. A short drive south on Rockland Street to Everett Street brings you to Audubon's Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, where deer can be seen grazing in the early morning mist or twilight evenings. Heading east toward South Natick village, the views to the south of the Charles River and the large undeveloped expanses of woodlands on the opposite shore are exquisite, topped only by the turn down past the historic Bacon Free Library and the South Natick Dam, where the Charles River cascades over the falls and under a historic stone arch bridge, as canoeists and a variety of birds share the water. A right on Pleasant Street brings you to Belkin Lookout Farm, a large working farm.

Northeast Natick still has a number of wooded areas, as well as several vernal pools. It has been targeted by more recent development and its character is at risk of changing.

Map 5 Land Use



Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



Numerous trails connecting these diverse areas have been and are being preserved. Building on the trail network is an important component of promoting and protecting Natick's landscape character.

C. Water Resources

Water bodies and wetland areas cover approximately 13.5 percent of the town's total area. A nearly continuous chain of lakes and wetlands extends through the town, from north to south. The water bodies comprising this chain include Lake Cochituate, Fisk Pond, Dug Pond, and the Indian Brook drainage. This chain continues through the southern portion of Natick along the Charles River corridor. The northeastern corner of Natick is dominated by the low-lying Sunkaway area and Nonesuch Pond. The Sunkaway is a low wetlands area fed by Sunkaway Brook that is crossed by Route 9. This results in Route 9 being frequently flooded, and at one time Route 9, was subject to continual sinking despite the constant filling and shoring up of the area. Many smaller low-lying wetland areas are scattered throughout the town.

1. Watersheds

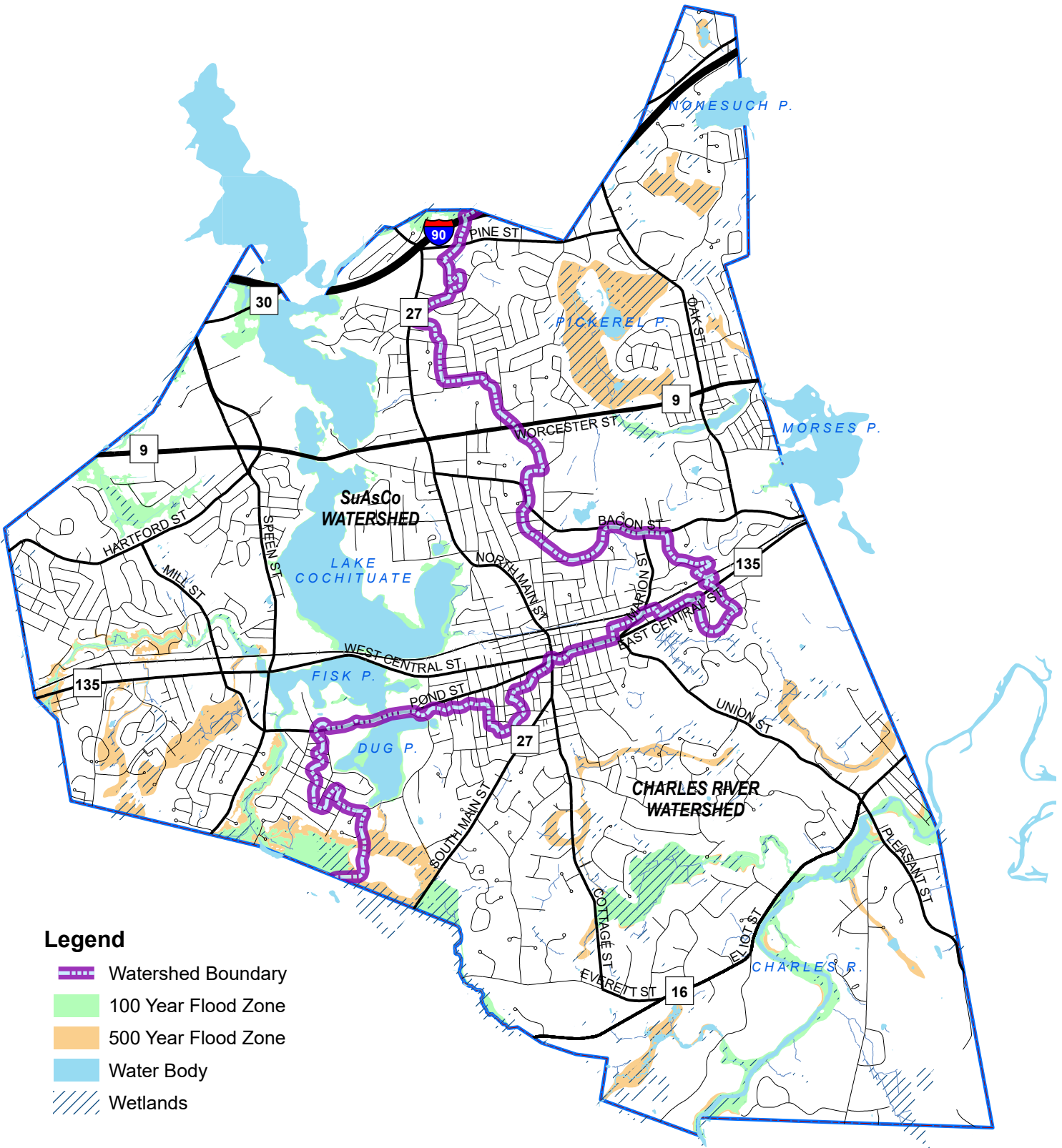
Natick is divided in half with two watersheds: the Charles River, which drains the eastern and southern portions of the town, and the SuAsCo (Sudbury-Assabet-Concord), which drains the western and northern portions of town. The watershed boundaries are shown on **Map 6**.

These drainages are classified as Class B waters under Massachusetts regulations (314 CMR 4.05). The Charles River passes through the southeastern corner of Natick. Major sub-basins within the Charles River watershed consist of Indian Brook (including Dug Pond), Davis Brook, and Jennings Pond (which includes the Sunkaway region and Pickerel Pond). Natick's portion of the SuAsCo watershed includes Lake Cochituate and Fisk Pond, with their tributary basins of Beaverdam Brook, Course Brook, Pegan Brook and Snake Brook. The table below is a list of all water resources under each watershed area:

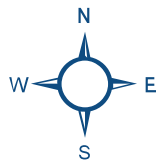


Dug Pond beach. Photo credit: Rec & Parks

Map 6 Surface Waters



- Legend**
- Watershed Boundary
 - 100 Year Flood Zone
 - 500 Year Flood Zone
 - Water Body
 - Wetlands



Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



**TABLE 4-2
WATER RESOURCES**

<u>SuAsCo Watershed</u>	<u>Charles Watershed</u>
Lake Cochituate	Charles River
Little Roundy	Nonesuch Pond
Fisk Pond	Pickereel Pond
Course Brook	Mud Pond
Meadow Pond	Jennings Pond
Beaverdam Brook	Morses Pond
Snake Brook	Dug Pond
Pegan Brook	Indian Brook
Wildwood/Speen Pond	Davis Brook
	Saddlebrook Pond
	MacArthur Pond
	Bacon Pond
	Grist Mill Ponds

2. Surface Water

Water bodies and associated wetlands in Natick comprise a total of 1,287 acres, approximately 13.5 percent of the town's gross acreage. The largest water body is Lake Cochituate, which covers roughly 440 acres within Natick. A complete list of ponds and brooks is given in the table above.

Surface waters in Natick provide many recreational opportunities. Lakes, ponds and rivers offer fishing, swimming and boating. They are often surrounded by scenic walking trails with particularly good areas for bird and animal watching. The Charles River has a boat launch at the dam that is often used by canoeists. Cochituate State Park encompasses all of Lake Cochituate and Fisk Pond and provides swimming, boating, and picnicking opportunities. The Town maintains a swimming beach at Dug Pond.

3. Aquifer Recharge Areas

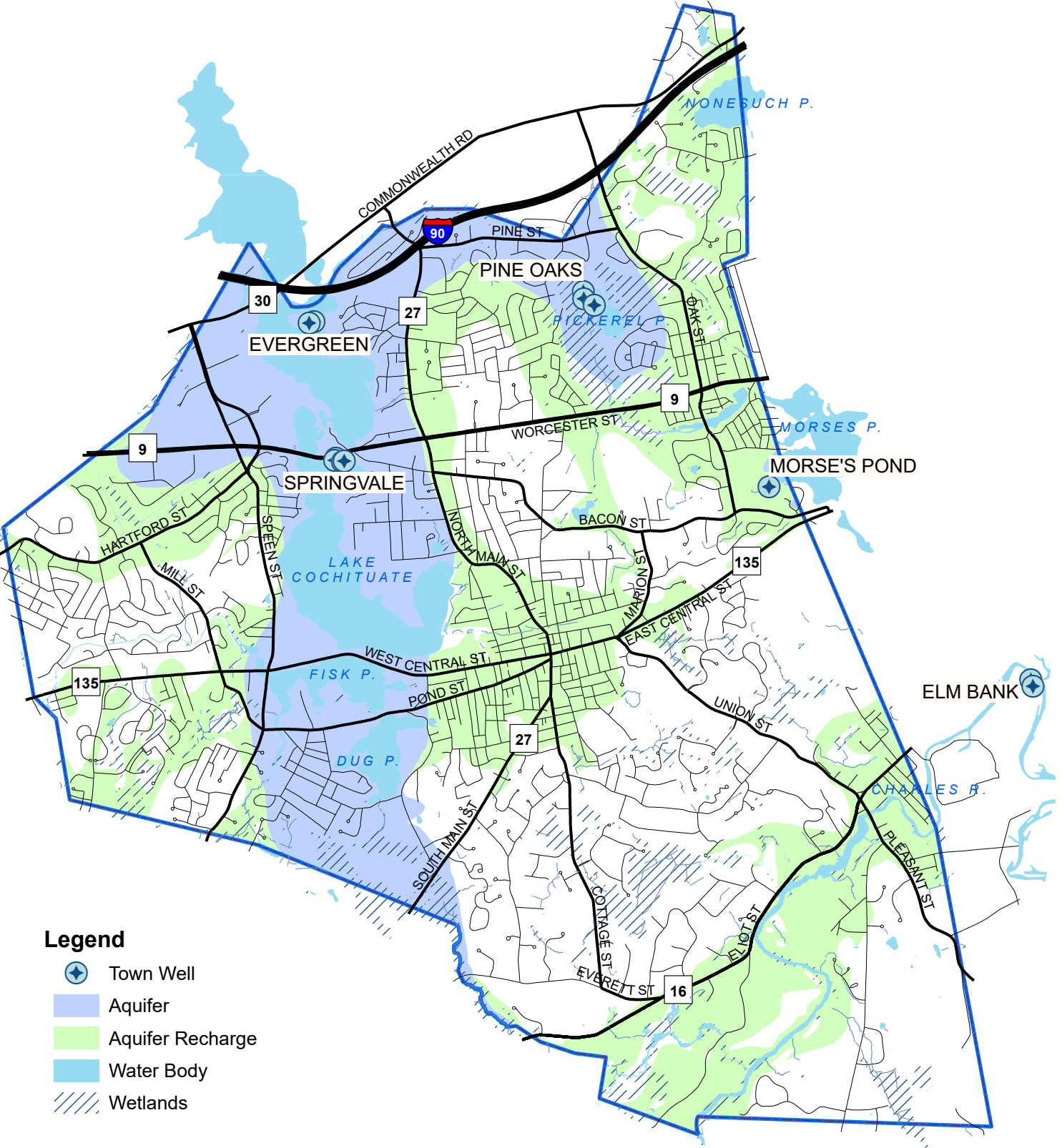
The Aquifer Recharge and Zone II⁸ areas are shown on **Maps 7 and 8**. The main aquifer generally bisects the town's subsurface from North to South, links to the north with Wayland and stretches over to Weston, to the



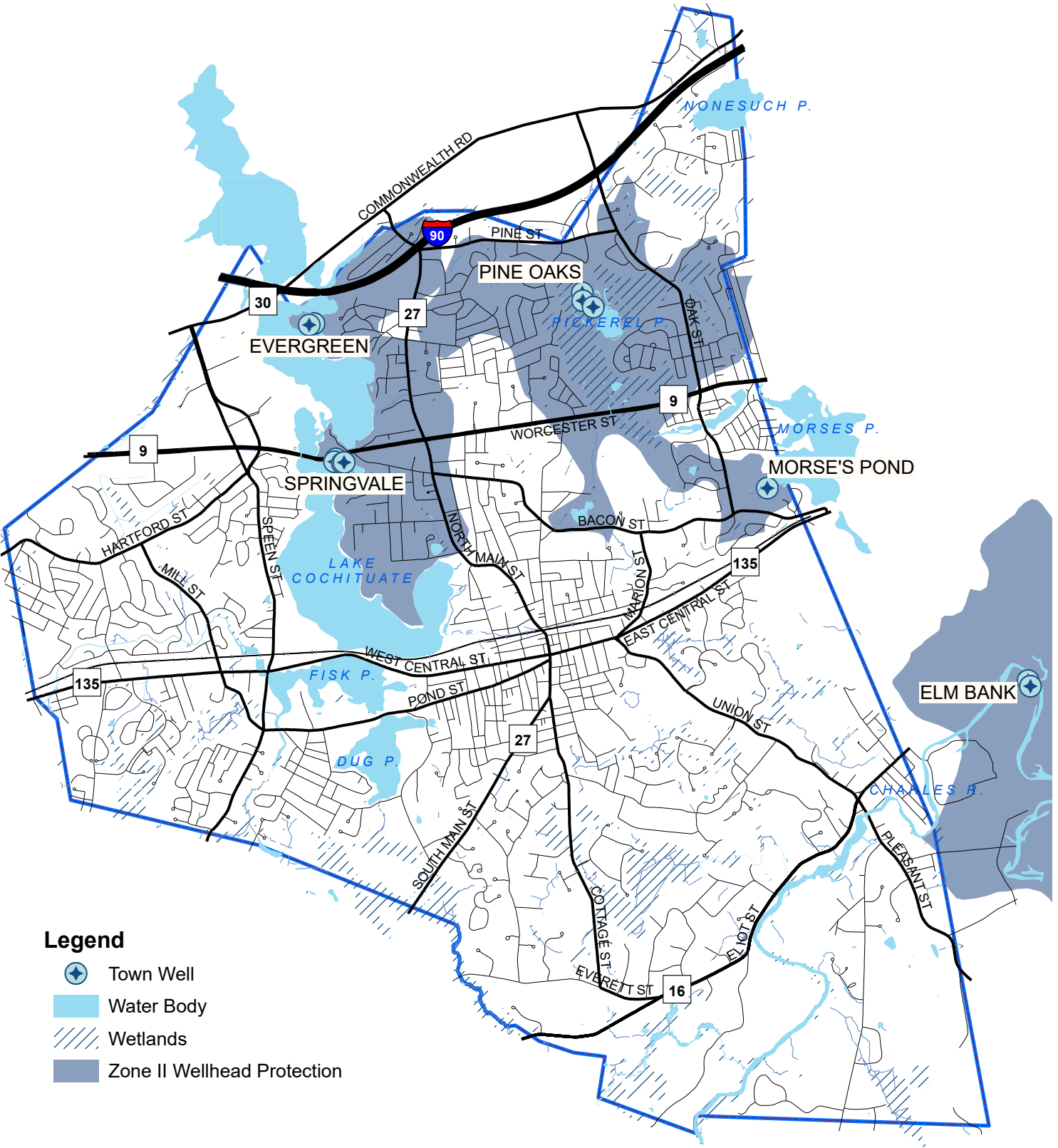
Natick's waterbodies provide an array of recreational services. Photo credit: Mark Polette (top), Jason Goldrick (bottom)

⁸A Zone II is an area designated by the State as a protected area for a municipal or community water supply well. Activities within this zone are strictly limited.

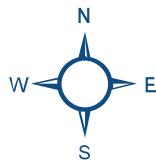
Map 7 Aquifers and Public Wells



Map 8 Zone II Areas



- Legend**
- Town Well
 - Water Body
 - Wetlands
 - Zone II Wellhead Protection



Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



east to Framingham then south, to Sherborn. The recharge areas are typically found in the second concentric circle around the aquifer area, but often sporadically shift. From the information on **Map 7**, it appears more land in Natick is aquifer or recharge area than not.

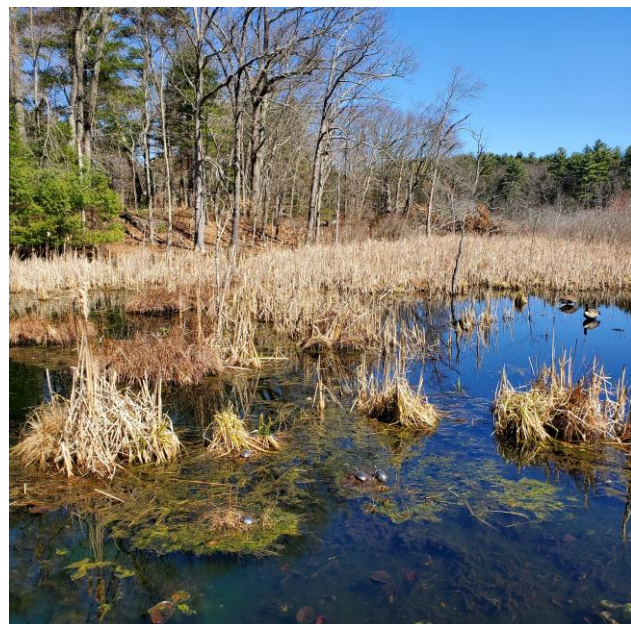
4. Flood Hazard Areas

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) most recent National Flood Hazard data from July 14, 2017 there are three levels of flood hazard areas present in Natick: A, AE, and X500. Zone A is an area inundated by 100-year flooding or which no Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) have been determined. Zone A areas in Natick are located around Morses, Fisk, and Dug Ponds, around Lake Cochituate, the wetlands south of Strathmore Road, and the wetlands areas surrounding the Sassamon Trace Golf Course. Zone AE is an area inundated by 100-year flooding for which BFE's have been determined. In Natick these areas include Nonesuch Pond, the wetlands around Jennings Pond and along Mud Pond Stream south of Route 9, along Beaver Dam, Course, and Davis Brooks, and along the Charles River. Zone X500 is an area inundated by 500-year flooding; an area inundated by 100-year flooding with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; or an area protected by levees from 100-year flooding. X500 zones in Natick include wetlands south of Winter Street, wetlands around Pickerel Pond and along Mud Pond Stream north of Route 9, along Beaver Dam Brook, Course Brook, and Davis Brook, three patches of wetlands south of Route 135 just west of Fisk and Dug Ponds, wetlands near Everett Hill, wetlands surrounding the Sassamon Trace Golf Course, wetlands along Davis Brook, wetlands north of the Route 16 and Union Street intersection, and along the Charles River. There are also X500 zones along a short brook near Glen Street and around a small water pool in the northernmost part of town just north of the Massachusetts Turnpike. **Map 6** illustrates the flood hazard areas.

5. Wetlands

Any activity within 100 feet of wetlands and/or within 200 feet of a river or perennial stream is subject to the discretion of the Conservation Commission, as per the Wetlands Protection Act (Chapter 131, section 40), River's Protection Act (a 1996 amendment to the Wetlands Protection Act), the state regulations pertaining to these acts (310 CMR 10.00 and 310 CMR 10.58 respectively), and Natick's Wetlands Protection Bylaw and Regulations.

The Wetlands Protection Bylaw, Article 79 of the Natick Bylaws, passed Town Meeting on April 27, 2000 and took effect the following August 24th. The Natick



Wetlands at Broadmoor. Photo credit: Olga Roemischer

Bylaw increased the restrictions placed on wetlands in town by dividing the 100-foot jurisdictional buffer area provided by the state law into a “No-Disturb” zone (first 25 feet), a “No-Build” zone (first 40 feet) and the remaining 60 feet which requires permission from the Conservation Commission for any work. It also regulates isolated wetlands subject to flooding and vernal pools (see discussion of vernal pools in the Fisheries and Wildlife section below). The Town updated the Stormwater and Erosion Control Bylaw in October 2019. The Bylaw requires a permit for land disturbances 3,000 square feet or more and prohibit illicit discharges into the stormwater system. Previously the permit threshold was 40,000 square feet. These bylaws can be accessed on the Town of Natick website. Wetlands are shown on **Map 6**.

D. Vegetation

1. General Inventory

As shown on **Map 5**, vegetation within Natick is typical of the eastern Massachusetts region. Upland areas are dominated by a mixed deciduous and coniferous tree line, while the low-lying wetlands are predominantly red maples. The undeveloped open fields in Natick have combinations of upland grasses, goldenrods, and asters with scrub shrubbery dominated by roses and brambles. Wetland communities form combinations of trees, shrub, and herbaceous layers, which are listed below. Some wetland areas exist as either shrub swamps or herbaceous marshes. A large portion of the Sunkaway is an Atlantic white cedar swamp, which is much less common than red maple swamps.



Pegan Cove trail. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

Several years ago, a field survey was conducted at various locations within the town (i.e., the Sunkaway, Pegan Cove Park, Indian Brook, and the Bacon Street Water Supply Area) to identify representative vegetation communities. The more common species observed in Natick's uplands and wetlands are listed in the following table.

**TABLE 4-3
COMMON WETLAND AND UPLAND PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED IN NATICK**

<u>Upland Vegetation</u>	<u>Wetland Vegetation</u>
Tree Layer: Red Oak White Oak White Pine Gray Birch Black Cherry Beech Crab Apple Hemlock Yew White birch	Tree Layer: Red Maple Ash
Shrub Layer: Honeysuckle Witch Hazel European Buckthorn Multiflora Rose Bramble	Shrub Layer: Alder Sweet Pepperbush Highbush Blueberry Swamp Dogwood Arrow-wood Swamp Azalea Withe-rod
Herbaceous Layer: Upland Grasses Goldenrod Club Moss Common Dewberry	Herbaceous Layer: Sedges Common Cattail Cinnamon Fern Skunk Cabbage Hydrophilic Grasses

2. Forest Land

There are several large portions of forested land in Natick, including a Town Forest, public parks, and privately-managed wildlife sanctuaries. All sites offer valuable recreational experiences and important wildlife habitats.

The Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, accessible at 280 Eliot Street, is a large uninterrupted 735 acre (plus 165 acres of Conservation Restrictions) block of woodlands (including some in neighboring Sherborn) that includes nine miles of walkable trails in addition to a quarter-mile universally accessible trail and boardwalk along Indian Brook. Habitats include both woodland and wetland areas. The Sanctuary has recreational value in walking and hiking, birdwatching, photography and sketching. In the winter months, the network of trails can be used for snowshoeing or cross country skiing.

Coolidge Woods and Coolidge Hill offer a scenic recreational area just a short walk from Natick Center. The short walk south from downtown makes Coolidge Woods a valuable recreational escape from the urban area of downtown. Coolidge Woods marks the start of the 1.5-mile Eisenmenger Trail, which continues past MetroWest Medical Center and across easements through several housing developments.

The 100-acre Hunnewell Town Forest on the south side of Route 9, was donated to the town by Mary Hunnewell in 1933 – in memory of her late husband Horatio Hollis Hunnewell. The forest includes a variety of topography, such as pine-covered slopes, mixed hardwood forest, a small stream, a marsh and a small pond. While the steep slopes are covered by pine trees, the lower and damper areas are home to red maple trees, sweet pepperbush shrubs and poison ivy. The forest is accessible from either Oak Street or Bacon Street.

On the north side of Route 135 near Natick Center, Pegan Cove Park is adjacent to Cochituate State Park and is leased by the Town from the State. The 22-acre park has an entrance lined by a majestic canopy of white pine. Despite its location on the lake, boating and swimming are



prohibited in Pegan Cove Park. However, it does offer recreational activities such as hiking, birdwatching, biking, fishing, and picnicking. In the winter time, skiing, snowshoeing and ice skating are permitted.

Mumford Wildlife Forest in the southeast corner of Natick is a managed forest operated by the New England Forestry Foundation, offering trails that provide a view, on a clear day, of Mt. Wachusett and Mt. Monadnock, 59 miles away. The trails continue through the adjacent Pegan Hill Reservation, owned by The Trustees of Reservations.

3. Public Shade Trees

Public Shade Trees are regulated and defined by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 87, known as the Public Shade Tree Act. Public Trees within or along

Autumn trees at Dug Pond. Photo credit: Mark Polette

the boundaries of Scenic Roads are further regulated by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40 Section 15C, known as the Scenic Roads Act. The Tree Warden is the lead authority for enforcement and compliance of M.G.L Chapter 87. The Office of the Tree Warden is part of the Natick Department of Public Works, Division of Land Facilities and Natural Resources. Trees located on public lands such as Parks, Schools, Cemeteries, and the Town Common are managed by the Supervisor of Land Facilities and Natural Resources, Tree Warden. Trees located on Public Lands may or may not meet the definition of Public Shade Trees per M.G.L. Chapter 87.

At the Fall Town Meeting on October 10, 1995, Article 25 was adopted addressing public shade trees in the Zoning Bylaw and adding the definition, “All trees within a public way or on the boundaries thereof, and where the boundaries of the way cannot be made certain by records or monuments a tree shall be taken to be within the highway and to be public property until the contrary is shown.”

According to the subdivision rules and regulations in Natick, any tree twelve (12) inches in diameter or larger shall not be removed in the construction of a new subdivision.

4. Agricultural Land

Two plots of scenic agricultural land in Natick offer recreational opportunities to the public. The Belkin Family Lookout Farm is one of the oldest working farms in the country. The farm was originally established in 1651 by Natick’s original settlers with John Eliot. Since then, it had been owned and managed by eight different families and individuals until Steve and Joan Belkin purchased it in July 2005. In addition to its scenic views and agricultural value, the farm also includes a petting zoo with emus, goats, donkeys, rabbits and sheep.

The non-profit Natick Community Organic Farm in South Natick was founded in 1974 on Town-



Natick Community Organic Farm. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

owned land and has produced organic crops ever since. Additionally, it provides open space and educational opportunities for the public. Its educational emphasis is on year-round classes for youth. In 2009 the Town transferred ownership of the property to the Conservation Commission, ensuring its permanent protection as open space. The farm is comprised of three primary areas: a vegetable and flower production space which constitutes approximately 2 acres of space; a pasture space comprising roughly 5 acres of space; the remaining 20 acres is forested or containing farm buildings/parking area. The tree canopy at the farm includes mixed oak, white pine, red maple, and mixed oak/hardwoods.

5. Wetland Vegetation⁹

Wetland vegetation in Natick is typical of wetland vegetation found throughout New England. Palustrine Forested Wetlands are wetland areas commonly referred to as “wooded swamps.” The flora in this habitat is varied in the canopy level by species such as red maple, white cedar, hemlock, spruce and fir. Other trees sometimes found in Palustrine Forested Wetlands include white pine, yellow birch, elm and ash. Wetlands shrubs occurring in these areas include highbush blueberry, sweet pepper-bush, swamp azalea, silky dogwood and common arrowwood. The herbaceous vegetation includes cinnamon fern, sensitive fern, royal fern, skunk cabbage, spotted jewelweed, sphagnum and goldthread.

Palustrine Scrub-shrub Wetlands are dominated by species that are still in the sapling and shrub stages. Such species include highbush blueberry, sweet pepperbush, swamp azalea, spicebush, arrowwood, winterberry, willow alder, dogwood, common elder, buttonbush and meadowsweet. Additionally, herbaceous species associated with these areas include cinnamon fern, sensitive fern, spotted jewelweed, sphagnum sedges, rushes and hydrophilic grasses. The vegetation is an important resource for associated wildlife as it provides nesting habitats and food resources for various bird and insect species.

Other wetland areas include Palustrine Emergent Wetlands, Lacustrine Habitat and Riverine Habitat wetlands. Palustrine Emergent Wetlands are the marsh and wet meadow areas. These are easily recognized by cattail vegetation and sometimes also contain tussock sedge, blue flag, and water willow. Lacustrine Habitats are permanently flooded lakes or reservoirs while Riverine Habitats are deepwater areas with flowing water such as rivers and streams. Both habitats provide trees and shrubs along their banks that serve as unique resources for wildlife.

6. Rare Species

According to the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Natick is home to six different rare species of vegetation:

⁹ Habitat Values of New England Wetlands, Cathy Pedevillano/Army Corps of Engineers Waltham, MA May 1995

- Shining Wedge Grass – Last sighted in Natick in 1915, Shining Wedge Grass is currently classified as a threatened species. It is a perennial grass with shiny dark green blades. It has a slender stem that grows $\frac{3}{4}$ - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall. It will grow in either dry or moist conditions, often in rocky woods and hillsides.
- Podgrass – Podgrass is a tall grass (9-18 inches) with spaced out leaves and yellow-green flowers. It is currently classified as endangered and was last sighted in Natick in 1899. It grows in acidic peatlands often alongside sedges and sphagnum mosses. Podgrass is currently threatened by water quality issues. Road salt, residential lawn fertilizers and septic system pollutants cause unsuitable conditions.
- Lion's foot – Lion's foot is native to the Southeastern United States but extends as far north as Massachusetts. It was last seen in Natick in 1905 and is now listed as endangered. It is a long-lived perennial with flowering stems as tall as one to two meters. It is found inland in open rocky woods and along power line right of ways. Its current threats are shading from trees and shrubs, and browsing by deer.
- Andrew's Bottle Gentian – This is an herbaceous flower species that grows deep blue flowers from two to four centimeters. Its stems are as tall as thirty to sixty centimeters. While native to the Northeast United States, the plant was last sighted in Natick in 1917 and is currently listed as endangered.¹⁰
- Purple Milkweed – The Purple Milkweed is a herbaceous plant species native to the Eastern United States. It has pink flowers that turn purple as they mature. These flowers have a tendency to attract butterflies and are often used for this purpose in gardens. It is currently listed as endangered, and was last seen in Natick in 1943.¹¹

According to the most recent NHESP MassGIS data, Natick is home to 20 certified vernal pools. Vernal pools and their surrounding critical terrestrial habitats support wetlands vegetation that is critical for the accompanying wildlife population. Vernal pools are discussed in more detail below.

BioMap2, established by NHESP and The Nature Conservancy, documents rare species and unique habitats in order to protect the state's biodiversity in the face of climate change. The Plan identifies Core Habitats – areas critical for the long-term persistence of rare species, other Species of Conservation Concern, exemplary natural communities, and intact ecosystems – and Critical Natural Landscapes – larger blocks of habitat important for wide-ranging species and connectivity and help insure long-term integrity of Core Habitats. Natick contains the following BioMap2 components:

- Core Habitat
 - 1 Exemplary of Priority Natural Community;

¹⁰ Blanchan, Neltje (2005). Wild Flowers Worth Knowing. Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.

¹¹ Ibid.

- 1 Wetland Core;
- 3 Aquatic Cores; and
- 4 Species of Conservation Concern Cores
- Critical Natural Landscapes
 - 4 Wetland Core Buffers; and
 - 3 Aquatic Core Buffers

Map 9 presents the BioMap2 landscapes and **Map 10** illustrates the Priority and Estimated Habitats.

E. Fisheries and Wildlife

1. Inventory

The topography in Natick encourages plant diversity and in the undeveloped areas creates cover and food for birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and fish. For most species, the best habitats are found in areas that are well watered, have abundant understory vegetation, and are relatively free of human intervention. For some game species, such as white-tail deer or beaver, the size of

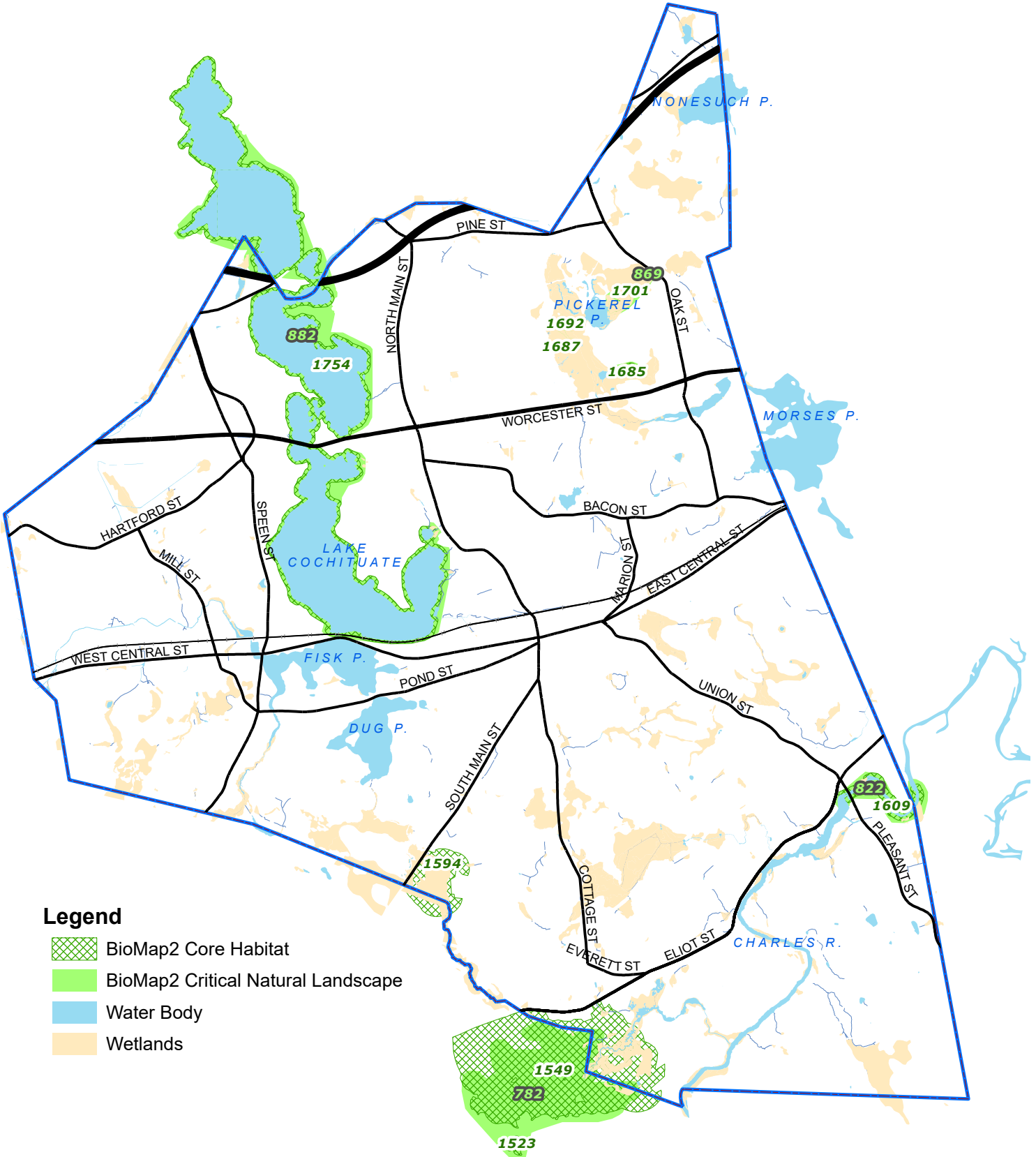


the contiguous range is important. Recently, sightings of moose, coyotes, beaver, turkeys, minks, river otter, and red fox have become more common. White tail deer frequent the town. In 2018 and 2019, there was an increase in coyote sightings due to a coyote pack living in the Town Forest. The sightings increased so much that information was published on the Town website regarding coyote safety and an interactive map to track sightings. In 2020, beaver activity has increased substantially in the Pickerel Pond area with multiple beaver dams and lodges flooding recreational trails.

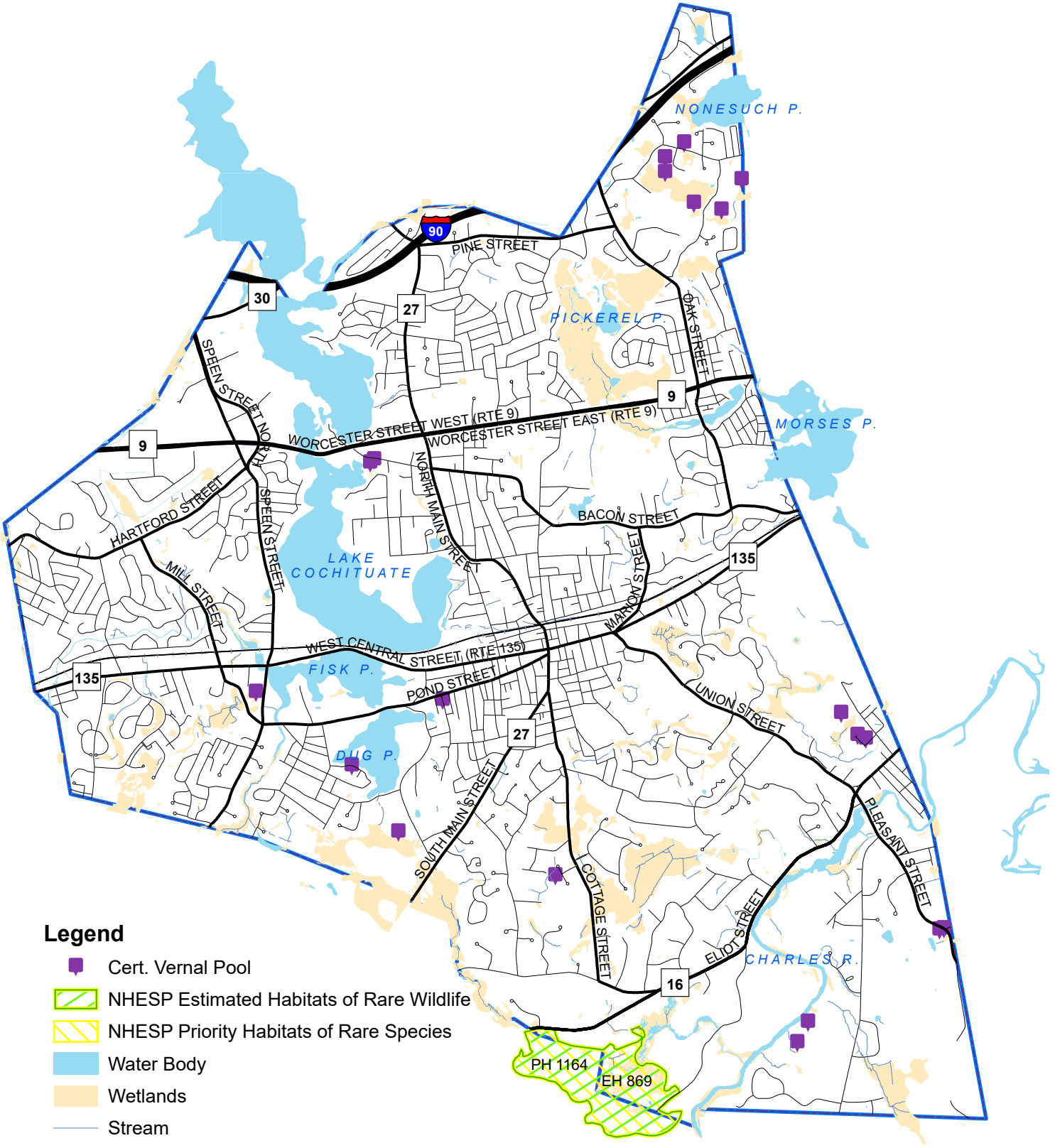
Specific wildlife data for Natick are not readily available; however, based on the Charles River Corridor Plan, Charles River Watershed Association, the presence of species listed in the following table are inferred.

Natick is home to a variety of wildlife species. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

Map 9 BioMap2

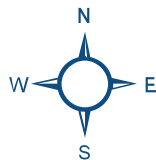


Map 10 Estimated and Priority Habitats



Legend

- Cert. Vernal Pool
- NHESP Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife
- NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- Water Body
- Wetlands
- Stream



Natick DPW-GIS
75 West Street
Natick, Mass. 01760
June 06, 2020
Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



**TABLE 4-4
WILDLIFE SPECIES IN NATICK**

<u>Birds</u>
Migratory/songbirds: Bunting, sparrow, towhee, cardinal, goldfinch, oriole, vireos, and warblers (some rare)
Birds of prey: Hawks and owls
Waterfowl: Geese, ducks, and teal
Marsh and river birds/waders: Rail, woodcock, bittern (rare), and heron
Upland game birds: Grouse, quail, and pheasant
Great Blue, Black-crowned Night, and Green Herons are common along the Charles River
<u>Reptiles/Amphibians</u>
Frogs, salamanders (some rare), snakes, toads and turtles
<u>Small Mammals</u>
Beaver, chipmunk, fox, muskrat, otter, rabbit, raccoon, skunk, squirrel, weasel, mink, fisher, and coyote
<u>Large Mammals</u>
White tailed deer

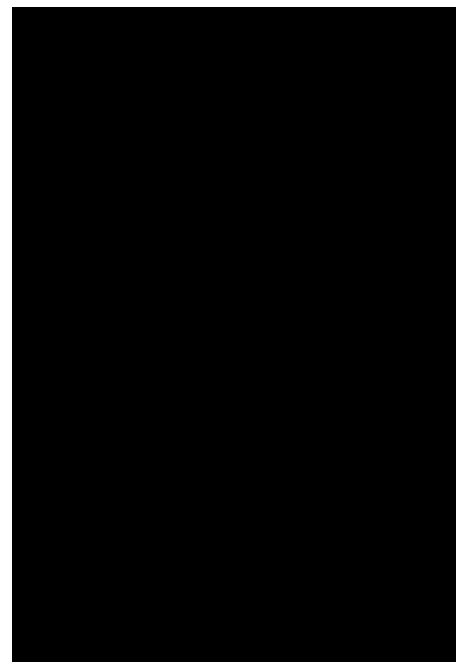
Source: Charles River Corridor Plan, Charles River Watershed Association

Fishing is a very popular recreational activity in Natick. Largemouth bass, yellow perch, bullheads, pickerel, sunfish, and white suckers are the primary warm-water species caught. Few of the streams in the Charles River watershed, however, are capable of supporting natural populations of cold-water fish. The region relies on stocking of several streams and ponds to support a “put-and-take” fishery for rainbow and brown trout. For example, a total of approximately 300 rainbow, brown trout, bass, salmon, and tiger muskie are released into Lake Cochituate, Dug Pond, and the Charles River annually. The fish-stocking program is managed by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

In addition to the fish stocking programs, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, in conjunction with other state and federal agencies, have begun a program to restore anadromous fish runs in the Charles River. It is anticipated that the once abundant shad, alewife, and blueback herring populations will begin to increase once the construction of fish ladders along the Charles River has been completed, and sixty miles of the Charles River will again be open to anadromous fish.

2. Vernal Pools

Vernal pools certified by NHESP in Natick are listed in the following table. Vernal pools are unique wildlife habitats best known for the amphibians and invertebrate animals that



use them to breed. Vernal pools, also known as ephemeral pools, autumnal pools, and temporary woodland ponds, typically fill with water in the autumn or winter due to rising ground water and rainfall and remain ponded through the spring and into summer. Vernal pools dry completely by the middle or end of summer each year, or at least every few years. Occasional drying prevents fish from establishing permanent populations. Many amphibian and invertebrate species rely on breeding habitat that is free of fish predators.

**TABLE 4-5
VERNAL POOLS**

	Pool ID Number	Street Address	Parcel ID
1	905	Winter Street	04-0000010C
2	906	Winter Street	04-0000010CK
3	1370	251 South Main Street	59-00000010
4	1583	45 Lakeview Avenue	50-00000063
5	1982	12 Front Street	54-00000070
6	1983	Cedar Street	54-00000065F
7	1984	42 Leach Lane	54-00000080
8	2023	Devin Drive	08-0000035C
9	2025	21 Mill Street	49-00000226
10	2123	26 Kensington Road	09-0000009A
11	2413	11 Oakland Street	51-00000119
12	2713	50 Kensington Road	09-0000010B
13	2777	107 Pleasant Street	70-00000003
14	2991	109 Pleasant Street	70-0000002C
15	3142	Tech Circle	09-00000028
16	5087	155 Glen Street	78-0000004A
17	5088	155 Glen Street	78-0000004A
18	<i>7085</i>	<i>13 Arcadia Road</i>	<i>26-0000039A</i>
19	<i>7086</i>	<i>13 Arcadia Road</i>	<i>26-0000039A</i>
20	<i>8043</i>	<i>0 Graystone Road</i>	<i>66-00000090</i>

Italicized Vernal Pools are new additions since the 2012 Natick OSRP
Sources: MassGIS and Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program.

A number of vernal pool indicator species are of concern in Massachusetts. The blue-spotted and jefferson salamanders are listed as species of special concern along with the fairy shrimp. The marbled salamander and spadefoot toad are listed as threatened. Other species present include the spotted salamander, wood frog, and featherfoil. Several other species are facultative vernal pool species in Massachusetts. The eastern ribbon and eastern hognose snakes are listed as present under their state conservation status. Special Concern species include the four-toed salamander, spotted turtle, wood turtle and eastern box turtle. The blanding's turtle and the ringed boghaunter dragonfly are listed as threatened and endangered respectively. These species of special concern are particularly endangered by the destruction of vernal pools and their surrounding terrestrial habitats.

3. Corridors for Wildlife Migration

An analysis of existing open space and NHESP Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape Habitat lands reveals two possible pathways to serve as corridors for wildlife migration in Natick. Wildlife corridors occur when several large tracts of habitats are located in close enough proximity for wildlife to travel from one area to another. One such stretch of land creates a potential North-South corridor from Lake Cochituate on the Wayland town line to South Main Street (Route 27) on the Sherborn town line. The corridor at its northern extent includes conservation open space around Lake Cochituate from the Wayland town line southward to West Central Street (Route 135). It continues with a small tract of Cochituate State Park recreational open space along West Central Street, and southward to conservation open space surrounding Fisk Pond. Next, it reaches recreational open space around and south of Dug Pond extending to South Main Street where it continues into Sherborn.



Great Blue Heron spotted along the Charles River. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

There is a potential East-West corridor for wildlife migration in South Natick along the Charles River. The Charles River, which offers a natural wildlife corridor, supports great blue herons, black-crowned night herons, and green herons (McAdow, 1999), as well as a large number of more common waterfowl. The corridor begins at the intersection of the Natick, Dover and Sherborn town lines and continues northeasterly along the Charles River just south of Route 16 to the Glen Street Park conservation open space. Finally, it crosses through South Natick falls

and into the Hunnewell Field Playground conservation open space through Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape before crossing the Dover town line.

4. Rare Species

According to the NHESP Rare Species Viewer by Town, the following rare wildlife species have been observed in Natick:

**TABLE 4-6
RARE WILDLIFE SPECIES**

Common Name	Taxonomic Group	MESA Status	Most Recent Obs.
Boreal Turret Snail	Snail	Endangered	1977
Blue-spotted Salamander	Amphibian	Special Concern	2003
Cow Path Tiger Beetle	Beetle	Special Concern	1937
Creeper	Mussel	Special Concern	2000
Eastern Box Turtle	Reptile	Special Concern	2007
Eastern Pondmussel	Mussel	Special Concern	2006
Eastern Red-bellied Tiger Beetle	Beetle	Threatened	Historic
Intricate Fairy Shrimp	Crustacean	Special Concern	1998
Mocha Emerald	Dragonfly/Damselfly	Special Concern	1971
Mustard White	Butterfly/Moth	Threatened	Historic

Priority Habitat 1164 and Estimated Habitat 869 are both located in Natick and cover the same geographic area. They are located within the Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary on the southside of Town, just south of the Eliot and Everett Street intersection. The habitat areas traverse the town boundary with Sherborn. NHESP does not publish what rare species live within these habitats due to potential harm that could come to these species from the general public.

It is worth pointing out that since the 2012 Natick OSRP, the number of NHESP Priority and Estimated Habitat polygon designations have decreased. This could be a positive as the species may no longer be considered as rare or endangered.

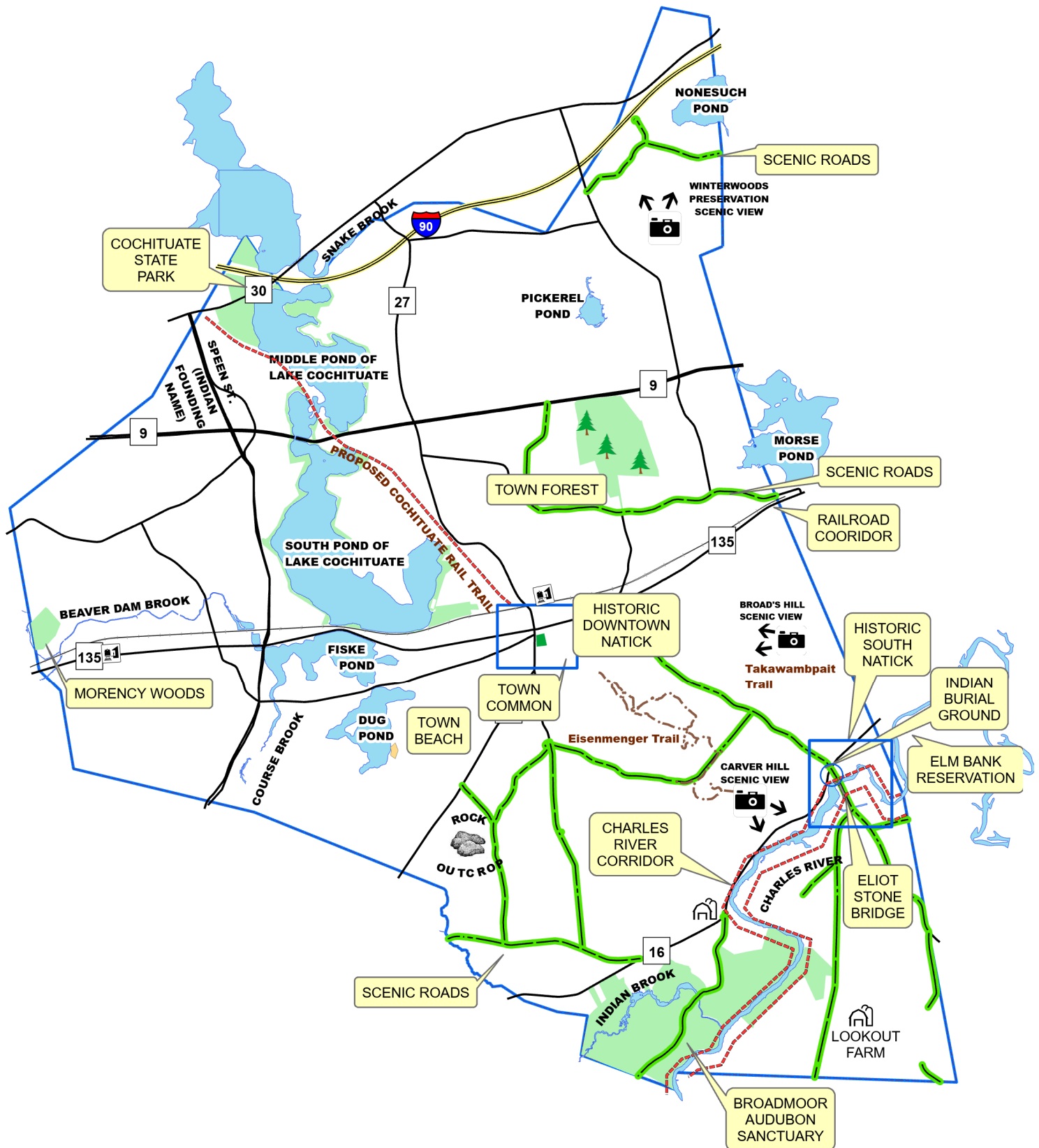
F. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

Map 11 presents Scenic and Unique Resources in Natick. A discussion of them follows.

1. Scenic Landscapes

The Massachusetts Audubon Society's Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary is a large and well-maintained natural area located along the Charles River in South Natick and neighboring

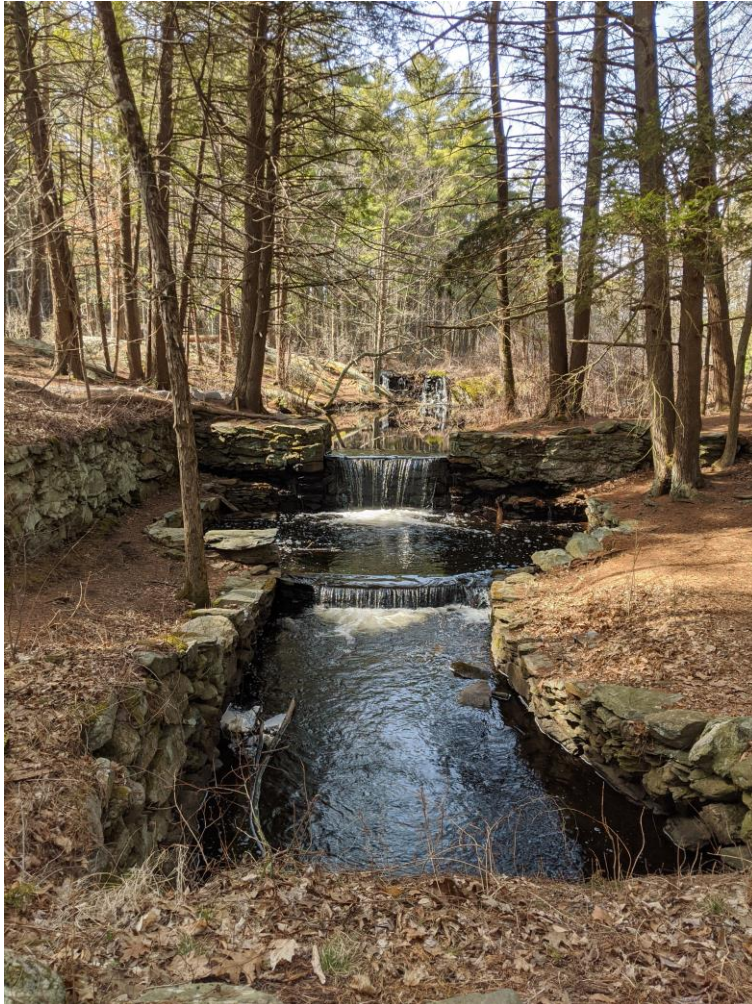
Map 11 Scenic and Unique Resources



Natick DPW-GIS
 75 West Street
 Natick, Mass. 01760
 January 14, 2020
 Data Sources: Town of Natick & MassGIS



Sherborn. Broadmoor includes woodlands and meadows, but is best known for its water. A boardwalk traverses Indian Brook and its wetlands areas, giving the public, and particularly schoolchildren, first-hand knowledge of the functions and importance of wetlands.



Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary contains a number of scenic spots. Photo credit: Marianne Iarossi



Lookout Farm. Photo credit: Rec & Parks

Lake Cochituate consists of three interconnected ponds, all within the Cochituate State Park. The park is enjoyed by as many as 200,000 visitors each year, many from urban areas in and around Boston. They come to enjoy swimming, boating, and picnicking. Although houses surround most of the lake, the state park owns a strip abutting the lake, providing natural scenery for park visitors.

The Hunnewell Town Forest has a large hill and several large stands of White Pines and Hemlocks, and is entered by a path along Little Jennings Pond, a scenic wetlands area.

Lookout Farm offers pick-your-own fruit experiences and a farm store. Lookout is one of several remaining farms in South Natick offering picturesque vistas of open space in a relatively quiet, undisturbed section of town.

The Sassamon Trace golf course, formed from the capping of Natick's landfill and abutting former apple orchards in Sherborn, and surrounded by school recreational fields and wetlands, presents an imposing feature, part of a broad expanse of open lands in both Natick and Sherborn.

Natick has a number of officially designated scenic roads: Winter and Frost streets in the northeast corner of town; Bacon (from Wellesley town line to Walnut Street) and Walnut Streets north of the town center; and many streets in the more rural southern part of town: Cottage Street, Dover Road, Everett Street, Farwell Street, Glen Street, Glenwood Street, Pegan Lane, Pleasant Street (South Natick), Rockland Street, South Street, Union Street and Woodland Street.

In 1982, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation undertook the Massachusetts Landscape Inventory Project. In Natick, areas along the Charles River, Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, Pegan Hill, and Broad Hill (east of Union Street) were identified as scenic landscapes.

Town committees and community groups are working at connecting all of these wonderful places to each other, to conservation lands, to other towns, and even to the Natick Mall and businesses whose employees use or would like to use alternative means of transportation. These efforts are positive steps at preserving and utilizing to its best advantage the invaluable scenic resources and unique environments remaining in Natick

2. Major Characteristic or Unusual Geological Features

Natick has several notable hills that offer scenic value and should be protected: Pegan Hill, Carver Hill, Broad Hill, Train Hill, Pleasant Hill, Drury Hill, and Tom Hill. The valley between the Sunkaway, Morse's Pond, Coolidge Hill, Indian Brook and the Charles River is another notable geological feature. The Charles River and especially its waterfall at the South Natick Dam offer particular scenic value.



Picturesque South Natick Dam. Photo credit: Brooks Payne

3. Cultural, Archeological and Historic Areas

Natick is also rich in archeological sites. One of numerous Indian burial sites include the large parcel that the Bacon Free Library is located on noted as the “Indian Burial Grounds” as well as a small plot on Pond Street within a block of downtown. Past improvements to the intersection of Route 16, Union Street and Pleasant Street unearthed Indian remains and artifacts, as did the construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike ramps at Route 30. Several residential building projects either unearthed similar archeological materials, especially near the Charles River, or were suspected of doing so. The Legislative grants to the Natick Indians of thousands of acres of land in South Natick and around Long Pond (now Lake Cochituate) make it extremely likely that many more such sites exist.

In addition to its natural attractions, Natick has a number of areas of historical interest. The John Eliot Historic District, in South Natick, is the site of the original Praying Indian settlement of 1651. This area still has the character of the early 19th Century, with Colonial, Federalist, and Greek Revival architecture. The Henry Wilson Historic District, running along West Central Street in Natick Center, preserves a number of houses from the mid to late-19th Century, including the home of Henry Wilson, 18th Vice President of the United States. Wilson’s cobbler shop, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located further along West Central Street. The Henry Wilson History Trail connects with Middlesex Path from downtown and leads to Wilson’s grave at the Old Dell Park Cemetery.

Natick Center, also listed on the National Register, is dominated by three and four-story brick buildings built immediately after the Great Fire of 1874. This is one of the few harmoniously Victorian downtowns in eastern Massachusetts. One of these buildings, the 1875 Fire House, was renovated in 2004 by The Center for Arts in Natick (TCAN) as a regional center for visual and performing arts. The 9,000 square foot, 290 seat handicapped accessible facility offers modern state-of-the-art performance amenities in a historic setting. Programs at TCAN include national



Town Common. Photo credit: Martin Kessel

performers, emerging artists, arts education, classical music, community theatre and visual arts. Walnut Hill School, which holds performances and exhibits and also supplies talent to TCAN, is world-renowned as an educational facility for high schoolers gifted in the arts.

The Town Common becomes the town gathering-place during warm months, with weekly outdoor concerts at the

bandstand, farmer's markets, flea markets, and holiday festivals for families. The entire downtown area has been revitalized in recent years by the presence of TCAN, the addition of several new housing units, the construction of the municipal complex and library, along with a variety of restaurants such as the Dolphin, Dah Mee, the Common Café, Buttercup, and Park Street Ice Cream.

Natick has two public libraries. The downtown Morse Institute Library, built in 1873 in Victorian Gothic style, has more than doubled in size, with the addition architecturally sensitive to the old, as provided in Mary Ann Morse's will. The historic Bacon Free Library, overlooking South Natick Dam, also houses the museum of the Natick Historical Society and its collection of Natick's history and natural history.

4. Unique Environments

Natick has no areas designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and no Outstanding Resource Waters. However, there are other unique environments worth noting here. As mentioned earlier, BioMap2 prepared by NHESP shows several important areas for biodiversity based on the occurrence of rare species. The largest is the area including and near Cochituate State Park, followed by Broadmoor. There are smaller areas along the Charles River near the Wellesley town line, some areas of the Sunkaway, and an area east of South Main Street near the Sherborn town line.

Additionally, the Charles River corridor provides a habitat for the "threadfoot" plant, as well as animals including waterfowl, white-tailed deer, mink, and otter. A unique Atlantic white cedar swamp is located around Mud Pond in the Sunkaway. More information on plants and animal species, and ecosystems within Natick are found elsewhere in this section.

G. Environmental Challenges

1. Hazardous Waste and Brownfield Sites

According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Waste Site & Reportable Release database, there have been 434 reportable releases of hazardous waste in Natick since 1986. Of those 434 reportable releases, 299 were oil, 51 were hazardous materials, 27 were mixtures of oil and hazardous materials and 57 were other types of hazardous waste.

MassDEP classifies the sites of hazardous waste releases by their compliance status. Most sites in Natick are classified under various statuses that are not cause for serious concern and many have been appropriately closed out. However, some sites in Natick are classified under Tier 1, which is the level that requires state oversight for cleanup activities. Natick's Board of Health works closely with site Licensed Site Professionals (LSPs) with the goal of reaching acceptable levels for human contact and closing the sites out appropriately.

The Natick Soldiers System Center, informally known as Natick Labs, is currently planning to clean polluted sediment from the bottom of Lake Cochituate. The bottom of the lake has been contaminated with Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) that were released in the 1980s, possibly in a transformer explosion at the Natick Labs research facility. The Army has proposed a range of plans for treating the sediment, from doing nothing to undergoing a dredging and disposal plan at a price of \$21.7 million. Any plan must be approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Most recently at the end of 2019, the Town was alerted to high levels of PCB discovered in soil at a Route 9 gas station. The contamination is from the result of historic urban fill used in the 1950's to build the commercial areas along Route 9. Land abutting to the north and northeast of the property includes a Town-owned park and conservation land containing wetlands. Testing at the park demonstrated most of the park was safe for residents to continue use. However, the southwest portion of the park contained levels posing an “imminent hazard” and have since been closed to the public.

2. Landfills

According to MassDEP, two sites in Natick are designated as current or former solid waste sites. Both sites are related to the Natick Landfill on West Street. The Landfill ceased operations in 1993 and was certified as capped in 2003. It was then transformed into a 75-acre golf course that includes leased land in the Town of Sherborn. MassDEP also recognizes the site as an active compost site.

3. Erosion and Sedimentation

The banks of the Town's waterways and waterbodies, especially the Charles River, must be monitored for erosion. Runoff from impervious surfaces including buildings, roads and parking lots can contribute to erosion far downstream from their location.

With more development, the frequency of erosion and sedimentation increases. The Town has had numerous situations with large scale developments during construction polluting down stream water resources. Improved permitting and monitoring is needed to help manage these challenges.

In October 2019, Town Meeting adopted a new Stormwater and Erosion Control Bylaw which requires stormwater and erosion permits for more development projects. This additional level of oversight – conducted by the Natick Conservation Commission – will help improve how new development manages stormwater and erosion.

4. Chronic flooding¹²

Most of Natick's land area consists of low elevation terrain and 13.5 percent of the land area is comprised of waterbodies or wetlands. A nearly continuous chain of lakes and ponds run north to

¹² Town of Natick Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018). Flood-Related Hazards, page 26.

south in Natick including Lake Cochituate. These waterbodies continue through the Charles River corridor in South Natick. The northeast corner of Town contains the low-lying Sunkaway area. These characteristics combined with increased impervious surfaces associated with continued development and worsening weather events caused by climate change, creates perfect conditions for flooding incidences.

As mentioned earlier, 100-year and 500-year flood zones are located throughout Town. A Vulnerability Analysis performed in 2018 discovered 2,148 parcels would be impacted by a 100-year storm:

- Residential parcels: 1,975
- Commercial parcels: 23
- Industrial parcels: 3
- State parcels: 24
- Other parcels: 66

A number of critical facilities and infrastructure would also be impacted.

An area subject to chronic flooding is the MBTA train tracks near the Natick Center station. The MBTA often is forced to divert west-bound trains on the Natick portion of the Worcester-Framingham commuter rail line when tracks flood after serious rainstorms. The station is built in a trench downtown, below the surface level of the streets. Runoff tends to accumulate particularly on the inbound track. Nearby neighborhoods are also affected by MBTA track flooding. These issues are anticipated to be considered in the MBTA station redesign and reconstruction which is occurring now.

Other areas experience localized flooding though much of this is “nuisance flooding” and not a threat to public health. However, this “nuisance flooding” can pose a significant financial hardship to individual property owners. Flooding continues to be an issue as was demonstrated in the Town’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) process that took place in 2018. These impacts are important to take into consideration when identifying land protection opportunities and locations for green infrastructure.

5. New development

The major issue for Natick appears to be, not so much the historic hazardous waste spills, but monitoring existing residential development and commercial developments to make sure that all reasonable precautions are being taken to avoid additional spills. Since the early 1980s, the Planning Board has imposed Aquifer Protection District controls on all new or redeveloped commercial and industrial sites located over or near the town’s aquifers. Each of these permits mandates a variety of specific requirements that each property owner must abide by. However, due to capacity limitations the Town does not conduct routine site inspections to make sure that the Planning Board’s requirements are being met.

Limiting impervious surfaces and untreated stormwater runoff into waterbodies from new development is an increasing concern in Natick as is in many communities. In October 2019, Town Meeting adopted a new Natick Stormwater and Erosion Control Bylaw which creates lower thresholds for land disturbing activities requiring stormwater oversight and permits. Previously the permit trigger was 40,000 square feet or more of land disturbing activity. Now the trigger is 3,000 square feet or more. Though this will help in managing new development's stormwater runoff and erosion, there is still a need to educate the public of this issue and foster new ways of capturing stormwater in an environmentally sensitive way.

6. Ground and Surface Water Pollution

The Town of Natick obtains its potable water locally from 11 groundwater wells at five locations. It is critical to protect the land around these wells in order to maintain safe drinking water.

MassDEP has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) for the Town of Natick Water/Sewer Division. This report assesses the susceptibility of the drinking water sources in town to potential sources of contamination.

Based on a review of the town's land uses and activities within Natick's Zone I and II areas (land surrounding the wellheads), a susceptibility rating of moderate to high was assigned to Natick's system. The report found key land use issues within these areas: hazardous material storage and use, residential land use, transportation corridors, and oil or hazardous material contamination sites. MassDEP recommends that Natick develop a wellhead protection plan.

In the past, Natick has dealt with possible drinking water contamination due to improper land use. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) were detected in Natick groundwater in 1989 and were found to have originated from a laboratory on the shore of Lake Cochituate. The nearby Natick water treatment plant responded by installing packed tower air strippers – effective filtration treatment systems.

The Natick Water/Sewer Division continues to protect the drinking water today with continual monitoring for potential contaminants, chemical disinfection and treatment, filtration systems, and source water protection. The better Natick's land is environmentally managed, the safer the drinking water sources will be now and into the future. Protecting Natick's Zone I and II areas, as well as existing open space and green infrastructure throughout the Town, is essential. Protecting additional areas is even better.

See also Erosion and Sedimentation for surface water pollution.

7. Impaired Water Bodies

According to MassDEP's Massachusetts Year 2016 Integrated List of Waters submitted to EPA in December 2019 and approved by EPA in January 2020, there are two Category 5 impaired waterbodies in Natick: Lake Cochituate and the Charles River. The full list of analyzed waterbodies are included in the following table.

**TABLE 4-7
IMPAIRED WATERS IN NATICK**

Category 1	Unimpaired and not threatened for all designated uses	none
Category 2	Unimpaired for some uses and not assessed for others	Unnamed tributary to the Charles River
Category 3	Insufficient information to make assessments for any uses	Jennings Pond
Category 4	Impaired or threatened for one or more uses but not requiring a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)	Dug Pond Morses Pond
Category 4C	Impairment not caused by pollutant. Natick's waterbodies under this Category are impaired by non-native aquatic plants.	Nonesuch Pond Fisk Pond
Category 5	Impaired or threatened for one or more uses and requiring a TMDL	Charles River Lake Cochituate

Lake Cochituate has appeared on the impaired waterbodies list since 2002 and is contaminated by dissolved oxygen, PCBs in fish tissue, and enterococcus. The Charles River has a more extensive presence on the impaired water bodies list. It has appeared on each report since 1998, and is contaminated by algae, benthic macroinvertebrates, chlordane in fish tissue, dissolved oxygen, mercury in fish tissue, nutrient/eutrophication biological indicators, phosphorus, and turbidity north of the South Natick Dam. South of the dam, it is impaired by algae, DDT in fish tissue, fish bioassessments, nutrient/eutrophication biological indicators, PCBs in fish tissue, and phosphorus.

Non-native aquatic plants located in Natick's water bodies pose additional water quality issues. Use of fertilizer on residential, commercial, and industrial lawns and stormwater runoff from roadways contribute to growth of these aquatic plants, choking out the natural ecosystems and functions of the water bodies. *Myriophyllum spicatum* (Eurasian Milfoil) and *Trapa natans* (water chestnut) are two examples.

Ongoing efforts to improve the condition of these impaired bodies are extremely important. The Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA) continuously works to develop strategies to clean the river. While water quality has significantly improved over the past three decades through wastewater treatment and the elimination of sewage discharges, the river still faces many challenges. The Charles River has two Nutrient Total Maximum Daily Loads which are being implemented through the MS4 stormwater permit. Stormwater runoff is the largest source of nutrient pollution to the Charles River. Nutrient loading causes algal blooms and overgrowth of invasive and nuisance vegetation throughout the river. Milfoil, an invasive species, continues to be a problem in Lake Cochituate.

8. Invasive Species

The Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG) is composed of 18 public and private organizations concerned about the problem of invasive plants in Massachusetts. MIPAG evaluated 85 plant species in a 2005 study to determine their invasiveness. The study determined there were 35 invasive species, 29 likely invasive species, and three potentially invasive species located in Massachusetts.¹³

Invasive animal and especially plant species continues to be a frequent issue in Natick. Invasive plant species are widespread and common on many properties. The Town understands the undertaking that is continuously required to manage these invasive species.

Early detection of *Symplocos paniculata* (sapphire-berry) has been discovered in Natick's Hunnewell Town Forest. The Natick Conservation Commission was awarded a small grant through the Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) in January 2020 to conduct an Invasive Species Management Plan for the Town Forest to address invasive species with special attention on *Symplocos paniculata* (first known observation of this species in the area. It has only been recorded in Wellesley and Sharon) and *Frangula alnus* (glossy buckthorn).

9. Environmental Equity

A small portion of western Natick, abutting Framingham in the area of Morency Woods contains Environmental Justice populations. The Town tends to see less participation from these neighborhoods in terms of Town events and involvement. These neighborhoods are also lacking in open space connectivity.

In general, the major open space and recreation resources are fairly well distributed in town. Cochituate State Park is in the northwest section, Broadmoor in South Natick and Hunnewell Town Forest in the east. However, the western and northern parts have fewer recreational amenities than other parts of town.

The water quality in Lake Cochituate has become an important environmental equity issue due to the number of people who use its fish as a part of their diets. Marco Kaltofen, who runs an environmental investigation firm in Natick and was cited in the Boston Globe, has interpreted an Army survey and concluded that 97 percent of all fish taken home from the lake are going to minority or immigrant households. Kaltofen believes that the language gap and lack of local education prevent such people from acquiring the knowledge necessary to deter them from eating the fish which are known to contain levels of mercury and other elements harmful for consumption. It is imperative to continue with efforts to improve and maintain the water quality in the lake in addition to educating the public on catch and release safety requirements. Pregnant

¹³ Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG).

women and children are particularly at risk for eating contaminated fish causing both physical and mental disorders.

SECTION 5 - INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION INTEREST

A. Introduction

Protected open space serves several valuable functions. Depending on the type (e.g., forest, meadow, wetlands, farmland), open space can provide valuable habitat for plant and wildlife; help replenish and protect aquifers; reduce and absorb storm water runoff; provide a sustainable and wide range of resources; and absorb and/or treat pollutants. Open space also offers numerous active and passive recreational opportunities and adds scenic views to the landscape. “Protected” open space is land that is preserved because it is under the care and custody of the Conservation Commission, is subject to a Conservation Restriction (CR) or other deed restriction; is owned by a nonprofit organization whose purpose is the preservation of open space; is dedicated as park land; or is otherwise protected by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution.

This section provides an inventory and map of areas that are important to Natick due to their current open space value and/or recreational use. Protected private and public sites have been included in Tables 5-1 through 5-3. Tables 5-4 and 5-5 list land with a lesser degree of protection. Table 5-5 lists Town lands, including open space associated with schools or other municipal buildings, that are not protected but that currently provide recreational or aesthetic value to the town. It should be noted that an evaluation of the handicapped accessibility of the recreational sites is included in **Appendix C** as part of the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

B. Protected Open Space

Natick has a total of 2,031 acres of permanently protected open space. The parcels are also included on **Map 12**, Open Space Inventory Map. As shown in Table 5-1, the Conservation Commission has 438 acres of protected land under its jurisdiction, while the Recreation and Parks Commission has 236 acres. Another 40 acres are protected for water supply protection or other recreation uses.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts controls 204 acres of protected land, mostly in Cochituate State Park. The balance is the Sudbury, Cochituate and Hultman aqueduct rights-of-way. In addition, the Towns of Wellesley and Wayland and the City of Framingham own a total of 21 acres of protected land within Natick.

Private, non-profit preservation organizations own 513 acres in Natick, much of which is within Massachusetts Audubon Society’s Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, which also extends into Sherborn. The rest is divided among The Trustees of Reservations, New England Forestry Foundation, and Dover Land Conservation Trust (See Table 5-2). In addition, Belkin Lookout Farm has 106 of its acres under Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR), while three private

residential developments have a total of 119 acres protected by deeds. Additionally, private landowners have placed 354 acres of property under CRs, which are listed in Table 5-3.

C. Temporarily Protected Open Space

In addition to the permanently protected open space described above, there are several categories of open space that can be viewed as having only partial or temporary protection.

Table 5-4 lists land included in the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B programs in Natick. These are programs which offers tax breaks for land in forestry, agriculture, or recreation respectively, in return for a commitment to continue those uses and to offer the Town a right of first refusal to purchase the properties prior to any change of use. Some of the parcels in Table 5-4 are also subject to a CR or an APR in addition to their Chapter 61 status. These are therefore permanently protected and are also included in the appropriate table for CR or APR lands. However, 121 acres do not have such additional protection. Since these properties can be withdrawn from the Chapter 61 program upon the payment of back taxes, they are not considered to be permanently protected.

Table 5-5 lists private cemeteries, occupying 90 acres, which are unlikely to be developed, but cannot be considered as permanently protected.

Finally, Table 5-6 presents other Town-owned lands that are not permanently protected. Of the 238 acres in this category, the vast majority consist of school properties that include fields and playgrounds. (Note that it is impossible to break down the open space within these parcels, but the extent can be estimated on a GIS map.) While these fields and playgrounds have no legal protection, they are valuable to the people of Natick and are unlikely to be developed in the foreseeable future. In recent years, in fact, Natick has replaced many of its old school buildings with larger buildings, and in every case, the decision has been made to build a taller building with the same or smaller footprint. In any case, there is an open public process before anything happens to these town open spaces.

D. Other Private Lands

As part of this update we have identified a broad range of privately owned, unprotected parcels which may offer opportunities for the provision or acquisition of open space, but this “Open Space Interest List” is not publically posted. Since the adoption of the 2002 Open Space & Recreation Plan, we have maintained a prioritized list of the major open space parcels in town. Since that time, we have continually updated the parcels and priorities as some of these parcels were developed and others were protected as open space. More recently, we have identified some smaller parcels that would not hold much interest by themselves, but that could be valuable in combination with other abutting parcels if aggregated. In some cases, we have listed land with buildings that could be converted to open space.

The Town appreciates the stewardship of owners of the remaining undeveloped land that remains in Natick. As opportunities become available, the Town will promote the acquisition and/or preservation of all or portions of that land. The Town will also seek opportunities to return previously developed or underdeveloped private land to natural conditions as appropriate.

SUMMARY TABLE

Category	Acres
5-1 PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS	
Town of Natick Conservation Commission	438.07
Town of Natick Recreation and Parks Dept.	235.73
Town of Natick Other	39.52
Subtotal: Town of Natick	713.32
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	203.93
Other Municipalities	21.10
Total: Protected Public	938.35
5-2 PROTECTED PRIVATE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS	
Private Non-Profit Preservation Organizations	512.53
Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR)	106.20
Other Private Protected Lands	119.42
Total Protected Private	738.15
5-3 CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS	354.20
<i>TOTAL: PERMANENTLY PROTECTED LAND</i>	<i>2,030.70</i>
5-4 CHAPTER 61, 61A AND 61B LANDS	120.52
5-5 PRIVATE CEMETERIES	89.63
5-6 OTHER PUBLIC LANDS: UNPROTECTED LANDS	
Schools/Playgrounds	226.78
Town Land (Selectmen)	10.94
Subtotal: Unprotected Public	237.72
<i>TOTAL: NOT PERMANENTLY PROTECTED</i>	<i>447.87</i>
GRAND TOTAL	2,478.57

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/CONSERVATION COMMISSION									
1.1	Winter Woods (Winter Street) ¹⁴	03-01, 03-13A, 03-13B, 04-10, 04-10CK, 04-11, 04-12	12.84	Conservation, walking trails	Needs trail markings and mainte- nance	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.2	Nonesuch Pond Oak Hill Rd End	04-20A	0.08	Possible boat access	Unknown	ConCom	Yes (water access)	Yes	Art. 97
1.3	Winter Street ¹⁵	04-10C	2.22	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.4	Pine Hill Oak Street	08-35,,08-35B 08-35D, 08-36, 08-37A ¹⁶	18.09	Conservation, walking trails	Good. Needs trail markings	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.5	Oak Street (Wayland Town Line)	08-6A 08-17C	0.54	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.6	Pryor Road (10, 15, 25)	13-126A 13-147 13-387	8.46	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.7	Sunkaway/ Pickerel Pond Worcester Street/Oak Street/Pickerel Road/ Pamela Road	14-16, 14-68, 14-69, 14-70, 14- 71, 14-78 ¹⁷ , 14- 104, 14-112, 15- 103, 20-96 ¹⁸ , 20-97A, 20-97B, 20-97C, 20-97F, 20-102A, 21-240B, 21-240BB	156.18	Conservation/ well protection, boat launch, walking trails	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97

¹⁴ Parcels 3-13A, 3-13B, and 4-10 were purchased by Town using state Self-Help (now called LAND) grant, by vote of Town Meeting 10/10/2000, acquired on 5/30/2001, LC Bk 1237 pg 94. Parcel 4-10CK was acquired by Town 1/20/2004, LC Bk 1279 p 198, Doc 1306451 “for conservation purposes and passive recreation purposes” (although Deed does not specifically mention Conservation Commission). Other three parcels previously under control of Conservation Commission.

¹⁵ Ownership of this parcel uncertain. This may be the location of Conservation Restriction labeled Jennison Circle for B&B Land Corp.

¹⁶ Acquired 3/30/2015, Bk 65131 p 264.

¹⁷ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 4/10/2014.

¹⁸ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/10/2000.

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/CONSERVATION COMMISSION (Continued)									
1.8	13½ Euclid Ave (circle)	14-111	0.18	Pocket park	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.9	10 Ingleside/Petersen Road	15-108 ¹⁹ 15-108A	2.41	Conservation, possible trails	Unknown	ConCom	Yes (Adjacent to Cochituate Aqueduct)	Yes	Art. 97
1.10	Hunnewell Town Forest 440 Worcester St	20-2 ²⁰ , 20-3	97.45	Conservation, walking trails, nature study	Very good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.11	Arlington Road (circle)	20-152A	0.29	Pocket park	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.12	10 Shore Road	21-9A	0.08	Conservation	Tiny lot, unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.13	4½ Grove Road	21-111	0.01	Conservation, access to Jennings Pond	Tiny lot, unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.14	31 Grove Road	21-52A	0.13	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.15	42 ½ Bacon Street	29-23A	0.04	Walking path (Oakridge Path) to Lilja School	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.16	Kennedy Middle/Brown Elementary School	Parts of 32-47A, 32-48 ²¹	5.28	Wetlands/conservation	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.17	John J. Lane Park 185 Speen Street	33-35A ²²	3.26	Recreation: picnic facilities, open field for games, volleyball, playgrounds, community gardens, walking paths	New	Recreation and Parks	Yes	Yes	Art. 97

¹⁹ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/10/2000.

²⁰ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/27/2009.

²¹ Portions of parcels 32-47A and 32-48 totaling 5.28 acres were transferred to the Conservation Commission by Town Meeting 11/7/2019; remainder of parcels remains under School Committee

²² Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/22/2009.

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/CONSERVATION COMMISSION (Continued)									
1.18	John J. Lane Park add'l leased parcel	Part of 41-84 ²³	4.087	see prior parcel	New	Recreation and Parks	Yes	Yes	temporary
1.19	11 Mechanic Street	35-106 ²⁴	0.93	Parking to be used for Cohituate Rail Trail	Parking lot	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Uncertain
1.20	Tony Anniballi Park at Pegan Cove 30 Washington Ave. (leased from DCR)	35-311	0 ²⁵	Trails, water access for fishing	Very good	ConCom Rec & Parks	Yes	Yes	Art 97
1.21	Walnut/Highland Parcel Bacon Street ²⁶	36-241	6.19	Conservation (flood control), trails planned	To be developed	ConCom	Yes (trails)	Yes	Art. 97
1.22	Boden Lane ²⁷	39-36, 39-36ZB	0.95	Conservation (abuts Beaver Dam Brook)	Unknown	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.23	24 Edwards Rd	41-24	0.17	Conservation	Tiny parcel, unknown	ConCom	Yes (Adjacent to Beaver Dam Brook)	Yes	Art. 97
1.24	128 Speen Street	41-83A	0.40	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	Yes (Adjacent to Beaver Dam Brook)	Yes	Art. 97
1.25	Middlesex Path ²⁸	42-36, 42-37, 42-45B, 43-402	19.2	Middlesex Path, dog park (Eddie's Park)	Good. Actively maintained	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.26	14 Sylvia Ave. 16 & 17 Spooner Ave.	48-37, 48-38, 49-192	0.84	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97

²³ Leased from Commonwealth of Massachusetts for 30 years, Feb. 1, 2012 to Feb. 1, 2042

²⁴ Acquired 4/11/2007, Bk 49273 pg 449

²⁵ Parcel is 22.0 acres, which is included within Cochituate State Park, owned by Commonwealth of Massachusetts DCR.

²⁶ Acquired 12/30/2008, Bk 52029 pg 551, as part of Walnut Hills Estates development.

²⁷ These two parcels were transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/8/1992.

²⁸ These four parcels were transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/8/1992, (along with 42-45A, which merged into 42-45B and 43-402). Parcel 43-402 was again transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/10/2000.

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/CONSERVATION COMMISSION (Continued)									
1.27	21 Home Avenue	48-49A 48-49B	0.53	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.28	26 Mill Street ²⁹	49-225	11.6	Conservation (stream/ wetlands)	Unknown	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.29	Grace Circle	51-31FA 51-31FB	0.79	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	No	Art. 97
1.30	Craigie Street ³⁰	52-5F	0.35	Walking path (Clearview Path)	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.31	Sherman Nature Preserve Front Street, with access from Eliot Street	54-65C 54-65F	12.92	Conservation (wetlands), Recreation (trails, neighborhood play area)	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.32	Farwell Street	60-7D	1.50	Conservation	No visible access	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.33	Cottage Street	61-7E	2.86	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	No	No	Art. 97
1.34	90 Cottage Street ³¹	61-17	2.50	Conservation	Unknown	ConCom	Yes?	Yes?	Art. 97
1.35	Natick Community Organic Farm 117 Eliot Street ³²	63-40	27.02	Organic Farm: sugar shack, greenhouse, workshop building, barn for animals, animal pens, farm stand	Very good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.36	Canal ³³	63-21B	0.29	Waterway	Good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97

²⁹ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting 4/13/1993.

³⁰ Acquired 7/8/2011, Bk 57111 pg 396,

³¹ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/10/2000.

³² Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 5/7/2009. The Farm itself also owns another parcel listed under Conservation Restrictions.

³³ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/10/2000.

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/CONSERVATION COMMISSION (Continued)									
1.37	Water Street end ³⁴	64-42, 64-64, 64-64B	2.00	Conservation	Very good	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.38	South Main St. at Sherborn border	65-1 65-1B 65-1C	16.03	Conservation (wetlands), abuts Sherborn conservation land	Good	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.39	0 Wild Meadow Lane ³⁵	66-17BH	0.41	Trail (connects Everett St and South Natick Hills)	Fair	ConCom	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.40	61 Cottage Street	67-17	0.09	Part of Sudbury Aqueduct Trail	Good	ConCom	Yes (Sudbury Aqueduct)	Yes	Art. 97
1.41	160 Cottage Street (Easement) ³⁶	67-27	n/a	Sudbury Aqueduct Trail	Good	ConCom	Yes (Sudbury Aqueduct)	Yes	Deed
1.42	0 Jack Patrick Lane ³⁷	67-28	2.95	Sudbury Aqueduct Trail	Good	ConCom	Yes (Sudbury Aqueduct)	Yes	Art 97
1.43	146 Cottage Street ³⁸	67-29D 67-30D	13.70	Conservation	Wetlands	ConCom	No	Yes	Art. 97
1.44	186 Eliot Street	68-11	1.60	Conservation	Good, not developed	ConCom	Yes (Boat Launch)	Yes	Art. 97
1.45	Pegan Lane	79-6	0.62	Conservation	Good	ConCom	Yes (Abuts Pegan Hill Reservation)	Yes	Art. 97
Sub-Total, Conservation Commission			438.07						

³⁴ Transferred to ConCom by Town Meeting on 10/10/2000.

³⁵ Acquired 10/20/2010, Bk 55632 pg 321.

³⁶ Acquired 12/29/2005, Bk 46740 Pg 582.

³⁷ Acquired 3/3/2015, Bk 64998 Pg 258.

³⁸ Acquired 4/12/2001, Bk 1235 Pg 127

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT									
1.46	Camp Mary Bunker 228 North Main St.	18-67B, 18-67C, 18-67D, 18-67E, 18-68A, 18-68B, 18-68C, 18-68D, 18-68E, 18-68F	5.06	Picnic tables, tent platforms, building with kitchen, rest rooms	Good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.47	Connor Heffler Park (East Park) 90 Oak Street	21-243A, 21-243B, 21-243C	5.9	Baseball field, 2 playgrounds, basketball & 2 tennis courts, picnic area, walking path	All new facilities	Recreation and Parks	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.48	Murphy Field 157 North Main Street	27-151A, 27-151B, 27-151C, 26-193	3.69	Picnic tables, playground, 2 softball fields, soccer field, ½ court basketball	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.49	Sargent & Mathworks Fields 17 Oak Street	29-270A, 30-14A, 30-36AB, 30-36B, 30-37A, 30-38	36.69	Picnic tables, 1 baseball & 2 multi-use fields, trails, DPW facilities, Morse's Pond Well	Very good	Part Recreation & Parks; part Public Works	Yes	Yes	Part 97A
1.50	Cole Center 179 Boden Lane	31-258A, 31-258B, 31-259, 32-185, 32-185A	9.91	Rec & Parks offices, indoor facilities, 2 playgrounds, 2 multi-purpose fields, walking path	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.51	Loker Park 79 Walnut Street	35-1	2.13	Picnic tables, playground, open field, ½ court basketball	Good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.52	Whitney Field at Navy Yard Field 41 Washington Avenue	35-300	2.53	Playground, multi-use field, basketball court, community garden, picnic area	All new facilities	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.53	Henry Wilson Park 181 W Central St.	40-72	2.25	Historical building with historical artifacts	Good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.54	West Field 56 Mill Street ³⁹	40-77A	1.17	Small baseball field	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Unclear

³⁹ Ownership status under investigation

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT (Continued)									
1.55	Indian Burial Ground	43-255	0.30	Historic site Indian burying ground	Good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes (Benches)	Yes	Art. 97
1.56	Cottage Square 77 South Main St.	44-34	0.15	Landscape	Good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.57	Town Common 3 East Central Street	44-131A 44-131B 44-131C 44-131D	1.65	Benches, gazebo used for concerts, open space used for numerous public events year-round	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.58	Community-Senior Center 117 East Central St.	44-271A 44-271B	9.44	Parcel 271A: Recreation (community center with gym, recreation and meeting rooms; park area, with walking track). Parcel 44-271B: Conservation (wetlands).	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	??
1.59	Lincoln Square 90 East Central St.	44-288	0.18	Landscape	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.60	Coolidge Field 9 Chester Street	44-380	3.66	2 baseball & 1 multi-use fields, basketball court	Good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.61	Coolidge Hill (Coolidge Park) 38 School Street Ext	52-150	19.00	Trails with kiosk	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.62	Coolidge Woods Sheridan Street end	52-164	19.24	Trails with kiosk	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.63	Sassamon Trace 251 South Main Street	59-10	74.22	Golf course, clubhouse	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.64	Chase Arena 75 West Street	59-12	15.50	Ice skating arena, DPW facility, wetlands	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.65	Glen Street Park 33 Glen Street	63-14	8.00	Recreation (accessible by boat), scenic	Not developed	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT (Continued)									
1.66	Grove Park/South Natick Multi-Purpose Area 23 Pleasant Street	63-21 63-21A	2.60	Picnic facilities, fishing, boat launch, basketball court	Fair	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.67	South Natick Dam (Old Town) Park 9 Pleasant Street	63-23	0.56	Benches, scenic area	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.68	Shaw Park 53 Eliot Street	63-61 ⁴⁰	0.69	Craft shows, informal play	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
1.69	Hunnewell Fields (Hunnewell Park) 24 Pleasant Street	64-48	11.21	3 baseball fields, concession building	Very good	Recreation and Parks.	Yes	Yes	Art. 97
Sub-Total, Recreation and Parks Dept.			235.73						
TOWN OF NATICK/OTHER									
1.70	Cochituate Rail Trail ⁴¹	17-13, 17-14, 17-18, 17-19, 26-116A ⁴² , 26-40A, 35-296, 41-RR1, 43-413A, 43-413B	19.10	Shared use path	Under Constructi on	Selectmen	Yes	Yes	Deed Art 97
1.71	Cochituate Rail Trail Spur ⁴³	17-5FA, 17-5FB, 17-5FC,	1.75	Shared use path	Under Constructi on	Selectmen	Yes	Yes	Deed Art 97

⁴⁰ Acquired by Eminent Domain 10/6/2014, Bk 64330 pg 165, with purpose "to acquire . . . for park purposes, subject to Article 97 . . ." and to acquire clear title to land that was donated to Town in 1934 but not properly recorded.

⁴¹ Acquired 12/14/2016, Bk 68588 Pg 503, "for use only as a recreational trail."

⁴² Lot 26-116A, railroad property now or formerly beneath the Loker Street bridge, was included in deed but does not appear on Assessors' map

⁴³ Taken by eminent domain 12/30/16 "for the public purposes of recreation and non-motorized transportation, to be used as part of the proposed Cochituate Rail Trail" Parcels 17-5FA and 17-5FC recorded in Bk 68696 Pg 307. Parcel 17-5FB recorded in LC Doc 1750618.

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Protection Status
TOWN OF NATICK/OTHER (Continued)									
1.72	Cochituate Rail Trail at Lake St. ⁴⁴	35-113C	.05	Shared use path	Under Construction	Selectmen	Yes	Yes	TM vote
1.73	Jennings Pond 53 Oak Street	21-95A	9.90	Recreation (boating, fishing)	Very good	Selectmen	Yes	Yes	water body
1.74	Boden Lane Cemetery	39-38	0.39	Cemetery	Good	Selectmen	No	Yes	cemetery
1.75	Broad Hill Reservoir 90 Union Street	45-12D, 45-22,,	7.71	Water Supply	Very good	Public Works	Yes (Trails)	Yes	Water supply
1.76	South Natick Burying Ground Union Street ⁴⁵	54-60AB*	0.62	Cemetery	Good	Selectmen	Yes	Yes	cemetery
Sub-total, Other Town lands			39.52						
TOTAL PROTECTED TOWN LANDS⁴⁶			713.32						

⁴⁴ Acquired 7/11/2018, Bk 71299 pg 191. Deed has no restriction, but TM vote on 10/18/17 said "for general municipal purposes, including without limitation improvements to North Main Street and recreational and non-motorized transportation purposes for the proposed Cochituate Rail Trail..."

⁴⁵ Shown on Assessor's Map, but does not come up on Assessor's Database or GIS search. Need to confirm Town ownership. Formerly listed as "Mr. Peabody and his successors.""

⁴⁶ Includes land owned in fee only. See Table 5-2 for Agricultural Preservation Restrictions and Table 5-3 for Conservation.

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS							
1.77	Cochituate State Park	6-31, 6-31A, 11-9A, 11-13A, 11-14B, 11-14C, 11-16, 11-18, 11-19, 11-20, 11-21B, 11-22, 11-23B, 11-30, 11-31, 12-60A, 12-84C, 17-10, 17-11, 17-12, 17-16, 17-17, 18-118, 18-39A, 18-75A, 18-113A, 25-9A, 25-12A, 25-24A, 25-253A, 25-253B, 26-19A, 26-39A, 26-168A, 26-168B, 26-168D, 33-3B, 35-311, 41-28A, 41-72A, 41-80, 41-83, 41-83C, 41-83D, 41-98, 41-119C, 41-119D, 42-34, 42-35, 43-436, 43-436A, 49-128A, 49-139C, 49-239A, 49-243C, 58-93H, 58-96	155.76	Recreation	Department of Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Yes
1.78	Hultman Aqueduct Commonwealth Road	2-3, 2-4A, 2-4B, 2-4C, 2-10A, 2-10B, 2-12B	8.31	Aqueduct	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority	Yes	Yes

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
1.79	Cochituate Aqueduct	6-21A, 7-77, 7-80, 8-1A, 14-75A, 14-75B, 14-75C, 14-75D, 15-105, 15-109A, 15-109B, 15-109C, 15-109D	18.79	Aqueduct	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority	Yes	Yes
1.80	Sudbury Aqueduct ⁴⁷	54-13, 54-81, 54-79, 62-3, 67-4, 67-16, 67-37, -71-5A, -71-5C	20.4	Aqueduct	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority	Yes	Yes
1.81	Water Street end Elm Bank	64-65A	0.67	Conservation	Department of Conservation and Recreation	Yes	Yes
TOTAL PROTECTED STATE LANDS			203.93				

⁴⁷ See also Conservation Commission parcels 67-17 and 67-27 and easement over parcel 67-28

TABLE 5-1
PROTECTED PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Zone	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
OTHER MUNICIPALITIES								
1.82	Morses Pond Off Border Road	30-37B, 30-37C	1.25	RSC	Recreation/Pond	Wellesley Park Department	Yes	Yes
1.83	Morency Woods Morency Street	39-32A, 39-32B, 39-32C	16.14	RSA	Forest	Framingham Conservation Commission	Yes	Yes
1.84	Hultman Aqueduct	3-9	3.71	RSC	Woodedcem	Town of Wayland	Yes	Yes
TOTAL OTHER TOWNS			21.10					
TOTAL PUBLIC PROTECTED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION LANDS			938.35					

Source: Natick Assessor's Office.

TABLE 5-2
PROTECTED PRIVATE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS

Site #	Description/ Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
PRIVATE NON-PROFIT PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS (MGL 59, SECTION 5, CHARITABLE EXEMPTION)							
2.1	Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary 280 Eliot Street	72-6, 72-7F, 73-1, 73-23, 73-7, 74-1, 74-1A, 74-11, 76-3, 77-6A, 77-7, 77-8A	426.70*	Wildlife sanctuary, Recreation(trails, educational programs)	Massachusetts Audubon Society	Yes	Yes (Fee)
2.2	Pegan Hill Pegan Lane	75-5, 79-4D ⁴⁸ , 79-5, 79-7	48.46*	Conservation, Recreation (trails)	The Trustees of Reservations	Yes	Yes
2.3	Lewis Hill (part of Pegan Hill) ⁴⁹	79-3	4.73*	Conservation, Recreation (trails)	Dover Land Conservation Trust	Yes	Yes
2.4	Mumford Wildlife Forest (part of Pegan Hill)	79-4	32.47	Forestry, Recreation (trails)	New England Forestry Foundation	Yes	Yes
2.5	Pegan Lane	75-1AA	0.17	Conservation	Dover Land Conservation Trust	No	Yes
Sub-total, Non-Profit lands			512.53				
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTIONS (APR)							
2.6	Belkin Lookout Farm	70-5 ⁵⁰ , 75-10 ⁵¹	106.20	Agriculture, Recreation (U-Pick, Barnyard Play Area, Tap Room)	Private	Yes	Yes (Fee)
Sub-Total, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions			106.20				

* This table lists acres within Natick. Broadmoor has additional land in Sherborn. Pegan Hill and Lewis Hill have additional land in Dover.

⁴⁸ Parcel 79-4D acquired 3/24/16, Bk LC1487 p 35, with CR granted to Town of Natick the same day, LC Doc # 1725554.

⁴⁹ Acquired 10/14/2015, Bk 66223 pp 366. Also subject to 1992 Healer CR (see Conservation Restriction section).

⁵⁰ Parcel 70-5 APR 3/5/1981, LC Doc 607453.

⁵¹ Parcel 75-10 APR 1/1/1981, LC Doc 607454.

TABLE 5-2
PROTECTED PRIVATE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PARCELS (Continued)

OTHER PRIVATE PROTECTED LANDS							
2.7	Hopewell Farms	66-33, 66-34, 71-2E, 71-2H, 71-2HA, 71-10, 72-63	62.89	Conservation	Hopewell Farms Homes Assoc.	Yes	No
2.8	Across from Cochituate State Park ⁵²	11-27	11.21	Wetlands, parking for State Park	TJX	Yes	Yes
2.9	Fairway Estates 218 Speen St.	33-61	32.10	Golf driving range	Fairway Estates Condominium Trust	Yes	No
2.10	Graystone (McHugh Farms) ⁵³	66-9O, 67-14O	13.22	Conservation, trails	To be transferred to homeowners association	Yes	Yes
Sub-Total, Other Private Protected Lands			119.42				
TOTAL NON-PROFIT, APR AND OTHER LANDS			738.15				

Source: Natick Assessor's Office

⁵² Deed Restriction. Current Deed: Bk 59637 Pg 150 (7/30/2012). Use restricted by prior Deed, Bk 30302 Pg 192 (6/16/1999), which states: "The Premises shall be used only as open space with public access thereto. . . . except that the Grantor may construct parking and related facilities . . . for the Lake Cochituate recreational area."

⁵³ Planning Board subdivision approval, July 25, 2018. Land preservation document to be filed with Registry of Deeds

TABLE 5-3
CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS

Site #	CR #	Description/ Location	Assessor Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Grantor	Recorded date	Reg. of Deeds Cite	Holder of Restriction	Comments
3.1	20	Jennison Circle ⁵⁴	unknown	unknown	B&B Land Corp.	2/11/2003	LC Doc 1253615	Natick Conservation Commission	Near Winter Woods
3.2	4	Mathworks (Apple Hill) Route 9	19-7, 19-8, (parts) 27-239 (all)	12.31	Apple Hill Association	8/30/1984	Bk 15760 Pg 568	Natick Conservation Commission	Mathworks
3.3	16	Mathworks (Apple Hill) Route 9	19-7 (add'l)	.90	DIV Natick	11/20/1997	Bk 27888 Pg 542	Natick Conservation Commission	Added eastern edge of Mathworks
3.4	18	Leach Lane	38-1, 38-1A (part)	4.70	Morgan Palmer	12/30/1999	Bk 31013 Pg 607	The Trustees of Reservations	Hunnewell/Leach Lane area
3.5	24	Leach Lane	38-1, 38-1A (part)	24.02	Morgan Palmer	2/9/2010	Bk 54276 Pg 161	The Trustees of Reservations	Hunnewell/Leach Lane area
3.6		Leach Lane	38-1, 38-1A (part)	36.262	Morgan Palmer	6/22/2018	Bk 71200 Pg 115	The Trustees of Reservations	Hunnewell/Leach Lane area
3.7	7	Algonquin Hill Union Street	45-18, 45-23A, 45-75, 53-42, 53-44	(43.69) ⁵⁵	Algonquin Hill Homeowner's Corp.	11/5/1991	Bk 21520 Pg 257	Natick Conservation Commission	Public trail easement
3.8		Algonquin Hill Union Street <i>amended</i>	45-18, 45-23A, 45-75, 53-42, 53-44	47.5 ⁵⁶	Algonquin Hill Homeowner's Corp.	5/26/1998	Bk 28618 Pg 525	Natick Conservation Commission	Public trail easement
3.9	12	Leach Lane	46-4 (part)	43.38	Louisa B. VonClemm	12/30/1992	Bk 22785 Pg 397	The Trustees of Reservations	Part in Wellesley and part in Leach Lane area
3.10	17	Leach Lane	54-80 (part)	20.75	Francis O. Hunnewell	12/29/1997	Bk 28021 Pg 341	The Trustees of Reservations	Hunnewell/Leach Lane area
3.11	21	Leach Lane	54-80 (part)	7.00	Francis O. Hunnewell	12/29/2003	Bk 41690, Pg 559 ⁵⁷	The Trustees of Reservations	Hunnewell/ Leach Lane area

⁵⁴ Map referenced in CR cannot be accessed.

⁵⁵ Acres in original CR, which is not included in the totals for the CR table.

⁵⁶ Revised number of acres. One parcel was removed, additional land added.

⁵⁷ This is the correct reference. The pages themselves are stamped as Bk 20363 Pg 89.

TABLE 5-3
CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS (Continued)

Site #	CR #	Description/ Location	Assessor Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Grantor	Recorded date	Reg. of Deeds Cite	Holder of Restriction	Comments
3.12	15	Hunnewell Farm Leach Lane	55-54, 55-59 (part)	4.03	Hunnewell Land Trust & Walter Hunnewell	3/14/1997	Bk 27131 Pg 003	The Trustees of Reservations	Natick portion of Hunnewell Farm
3.13	21	Leach Lane	54-80 (part)	7.00	Francis O. Hunnewell	12/29/2003	Bk 41690, Pg 559 ⁵⁸	The Trustees of Reservations	Hunnewell/ Leach Lane area
3.14	15	Hunnewell Farm Leach Lane	55-54, 55-59 (part)	4.03	Hunnewell Land Trust & Walter Hunnewell	3/14/1997	Bk 27131 Pg 003	The Trustees of Reservations	Natick portion of Hunnewell Farm
3.15		Woodland Village ⁵⁹	62-9FA, 62-9FB, 62-9FC, 62-9FD	21.41	Woodland Village Homeowners Corporation	6/29/2000	Bk 31555 Pg 285	Natick Conservation Commission	
3.16	6	Farwell Street ⁶⁰	(60-7D)	(1.50)	Elliot Goodman & Theodore Goguen	10/27/1987	Bk 18643 Pg 207	Inhab. of Natick	
3.17	5	Countryside Road ⁶¹	(61-7E)	(3.82)	Theodore & Marlene Goguen	10/27/1987	Bk 18643 Pg 212	Inhab. of Natick	
3.18	25	South Natick Hills	66-24 (part)	15.84	South Natick Hills LLC	1/21/2014	Bk 63197 Pg 484	Natick Conservation Commission	
3.19	13	185 Eliot Street ⁶²	68-12AA 68-12AB	4.32	Benjamin B. Taylor & Marshall Colins Trust	7/2/1993	Bk 23386 Pg 355	Town of Natick	Historic house. Adjacent to 68- 12AC above

⁵⁸ This is the correct reference. The pages themselves are stamped as Bk 20363 Pg 89.

⁵⁹ Does not appear to have been signed by Energy & Environmental Affairs, and not listed in EEA database.

⁶⁰ Assessor lists this and following parcel (61-7E) as owned by Conservation Commission, and we have included them in the ConCom section, but deed reflects only a CR.

⁶¹ See note on prior parcel (60-7D)

⁶² CR provides that Parcel 68-12AA may have uses compatible with the historic house on the property, but that Parcel 68-12AB may be used only as conservation land. Bk 23386 Pg 355. The same CR covers these parcels and the NCOF parcel listed in the next row.

TABLE 5-3
CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS (Continued)

Site #	CR #	Description/ Location	Assessor Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Grantor	Recorded date	Reg. of Deeds Cite	Holder of Restriction	Comments
3.20	13	Natick Community Organic Farm Eliot St. & Riverbend Dr ⁶³	68-12AC	3.00	Benjamin B. Taylor & Marshall Colins Trust	7/2/1993	Bk 23386 Pg 355	Town of Natick	Farm
3.21	14	23 Glenwood Street	69-36, 69-39	42.71	Arnold W. , Walter & Jane P. Hunnewell	9/12/1996	Bk 26660 Pg 207	MassAudubon	Adjacent to Glenwood Cemetery and Charles River
3.22	22	78 Pleasant Street	70-15A, 70-15D (part)	5.65	Frank & Sheila Maguillon	8/12/2005	Bk 45844 Pg 433	The Trustees of Reservations	
3.23	23	Broadmoor 294 Eliot Street ⁶⁴	72-7F	(2.00)	Mass. Audubon Society	8/7/2008	Bk 51546 Pg 528	Natick Conservation Commission	Part of Broadmoor
3.24	8	Adjoining Broadmoor 152 South Street	77-5	0.39	South Street Realty Trust Emily L. S. Lewis	2/5/1992	LC Doc 861709	MassAudubon	Adjoining Broadmoor at Sherborn line
3.25	1	155 Glen Street	74-1, 74-1A ⁶⁵	(35.81)	Arnold W. Hunnewell	12/22/1978	Bk 13611, Pg 479	MassAudubon	Became part of Broadmoor
3.26	2	155 Glen Street	78-4A (1st part)	18.80	Arnold W. Hunnewell	12/22/1978	Bk 13611 Pg 487	MassAudubon	Adjoining Broadmoor
3.27	9	155 Glen Street	78-4A (2d part)	36.02	Arnold W. Hunnewell	12/30/1991	Bk 21642, Pg 106	MassAudubon	Adjoining Broadmoor
3.28	9 A- 1	155 Glen Street	78-4A (3d part)	5.01	Arnold W. Hunnewell	12/27/2018	Bk 72060 Pg 432	MassAudubon	Adjoining Broadmoor

⁶³ This land is owned by Natick Commnity Organic Farm itself, and is not contiguous to the main farm property, which is listed under Natick Conservation Commission.

⁶⁴ Parcel purchased by Mass. Audubon Society 9/28/2005, Bk 46160 Pg 334. CR granted to Natick Conservation Commission as cited in table. Area is included in Mass. Audubon, so not counted here to avoid double counting.

⁶⁵ These two parcels were donated to Mass. Audubon Society to become part of Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, and are included in the appropriate section of this Inventory. Acres are not counted in total here, to avoid double counting.

TABLE 5-3
CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS (Continued)

Site #	CR #	Description/ Location	Assessor Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Grantor	Recorded date	Reg. of Deeds Cite	Holder of Restriction	Comments
3.29	10	Lewis Hill (Part of Pegan Hill) ⁶⁶	79-3	(3.44)	Harry J. & Cynthia P. Healer	10/1/1992	LC Doc 882627	Dover Land Conservation Trust	CR extends into Dover.
3.30	11	Pegan Hill area	79-2A	0.20	Elizabeth B. Jackson	10/1/1992	Bk 22454 Pg 57	Dover Land Conservation Trust	CR extends into Dover. Adjacent to Pegan Hill
3.31	26	Pegan Hill ⁶⁷	79-4D	(16.30)	Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust (see note)	3/24/2016	LC Doc 0175554	Natick Conservation Commission	
TOTAL CONSERVATION RESTRICTIONS				354.20					

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

⁶⁶ Included in land subsequently purchased by Dover Land Conservation Trust, but this CR remains in effect. See section on land protected by Private Nonprofit Preservation Organizations.

⁶⁷ Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust, Inc. is affiliated with The Trustees of Reservations, and the parcel was conveyed to The Trustees the same day as the CR was filed. The acres are included in The Trustees listing under Private Nonprofit Preservation Organizations, and are not counted in the CR total.

TABLE 5-4
CHAPTER 61, 61A and 61B LANDS

Note: items in italics are also listed in APR or CR table, and are not included in total acres for this table.

Site #	Description/Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area* (Acres)	Existing Uses	Owner
CHAPTER 61					
4.1	<i>Morgan Palmer 1 Dorset Lane</i>	38-1A	(65.404)	<i>Forest lands</i>	<i>Morgan Palmer</i>
4.2	<i>Arnold W. Hunnewell, tr.⁶⁸</i>	46-4	(92.51)	<i>Forest lands</i>	<i>Hillhurst Trust</i>
4.3	<i>Arnold W. Hunnewell et al, tr.⁶⁹</i>	46-6	(2.71)	<i>Forest lands</i>	
4.4	<i>Arnold W. Hunnewell, tr.⁷⁰</i>	54-80	(52.353)	<i>Forest lands</i>	
CHAPTER 61A					
4.5	<i>Belkin Lookout Farm 89 Pleasant Street (APR portion)</i>	70-5, 75-10	(106.20)	<i>Orchards</i>	
4.6	<i>Belkin Lookout Farm 89 Pleasant Street (non-APR portion)</i>	75-7, 75-8A, 75-10B, 75-10C, 75-10D, 75-15 ⁷¹ , 79-4B	41.91	<i>Orchards</i>	
4.7	<i>Sunshine Farm 2 Speen Street</i>	57-3	11.55	<i>Truck crops</i>	<i>Lawrence Geoghegan</i>
4.8	<i>Hunnewell Farm Leach Lane</i>	55-54 55-59	(5.63)	<i>Field crops Pasture</i>	<i>Hunnewell Land Trust</i>

⁶⁸ Formerly owned by Louisa von Clemm, deceased.

⁶⁹ Formerly owned by Louisa von Clemm, deceased.

⁷⁰ Formerly owned by Francis Hunnewell, deceased.

⁷¹ Parcel 75-15 is protected as open space by a Planning Board decision of March 10, 1987, and a clarification of January 8, 1991, recorded 3/11/1981, LC Doc 839058.

TABLE 5-4
CHAPTER 61, 61A and 61B LANDS (Continued)

Site #	Description/Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area* (Acres)	Existing Uses	Owner
CHAPTER 61A (Continued)					
4.9	Martin Kozlowski 80 Rockland Street	66-10	7.5	Field crops	Martin Kozlowski Real Estate Trust
4.10	<i>Arnold W. Hunnewell Glenwood Street</i>	69-36 69-39	(41.99)	<i>Field crops</i>	<i>Arnold W. Hunnewell Jr., et al</i>
4.11	Arnold W. Hunnewell 155 Glen Street	74-1B	11.02	Field crops	Arnold W. Hunnewell
4.12	<i>Arnold W. Hunnewell 155 Glen Street</i>	78-4A	(54.61)	<i>Non-productive land</i>	<i>Indian Farm Trust, Arnold W. Hunnewell Jr,</i>
4.13	Eva G. Gardner 80 Pegan Lane, Dover	79-4A, 79-4C	12.10	Field crops	
CHAPTER 61B					
4.14	Phillips Pond Homes Phillips Pond Road	69-55, 74-3, 74-3A, 74-3B, 74-3C, 74-3D 74-5, 74-5NA	15.024	Hiking trails	Phillps Pond Homes Association
4.15	<i>Algonquin Hills Union Street.</i>	<i>45-18, 45-23A, 45-75, 53-42, 53-44</i>	(48.19)	<i>Hiking trails</i>	<i>Algonquin Hill Homeowners Association</i>
4.16	Woodland Village Davis Brook Drive,	62-9FA, 62-9FB, 62-9FC, 62-9FD	21.411	Hiking trails	Woodland Village Homeowners Corporation
TOTAL CHAPTER 61, 61A AND 61B LANDS excluding land also protected by APR or CR			120.52		

Note: total of all Chapter 61, 61A and 61B Lands, including those also protected by APR or CR, is 590.11 acres.

Source: Natick Assessors Office

TABLE 5-5
PRIVATE CEMETERIES

Site #	Description/Location	Assessor's Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses	Owner
5.1	North Cemetery North Main Street	18-11	2.8	Cemetery	North Cemetery Association
5.2	Dell Park Cemetery Pond Street	41-120, 42-23 ⁷² , 50-73	45.75	Cemetery	Dell Park Cemetery
5.3	Hebrew Cemetery Windsor Avenue	59-38, 59-39, 59-40, 59-41, 59-45A, 59-45B, 59-45C 59-46, 59-47, 59-48A, 59-48B, 59-48C,	5.14	Cemetery	Hebrew Cemetery Association, Inc.
5.4	Glenwood Cemetery/ Glenwood Street	69-37, 69-38	19.5	Cemetery	Glenwood Cemetery Associatioin
5.5	St. Patrick's Cemetery	50-36	16.44	Cemetery	Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston
TOTAL PRIVATE CEMETERY LANDS			89.63		

Source: Natick Assessors Office

⁷² *Parcel 42-23 is shown on Assessor's Map, but does not come up on Assessor's Database or GIS search

TABLE 5-6
OTHER PUBLIC LANDS/UN-PROTECTED LANDS

Site #	Location/ Description	Assessors Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
SCHOOLS/PLAYGROUNDS							
6.1	Bennett-Hemenway Elementary School, 22 E. Evergreen Road	12-200	10.23	School, 2 multi-use fields, 2 playgrounds	School Committee	Yes	Yes
6.2	Wilson Middle School 22 Rutledge Road	19-18B, 19-19, 19-20, 19-21B, 19-22C, 19-22E	12.21	School, baseball & multi-use fields, basketball court	School Committee	Yes	Yes
6.3	Lilja Elementary School 41 Bacon Street	29-271	5.19	School, baseball & informal fields, basketball court, 3 playgrounds	School Committee	Yes	Yes
6.4	Kennedy Middle School/Brown Elementary School 165 Mill Street/1 Jean Burke Drive	32-13, 32-46, 32-47A, 32-48 ⁷³ -32-48B	30.41	School, baseball & 2 soccer fields, 1½ basketball courts, 2 playgrounds	School Committee	Yes	Yes
6.5	Natick High School/Memorial Beach/Memorial Field/Timothy Coolidge Hill 15 West Street	50-18, 50-18B, 50-18C, 59-8, 59-9, 59:10A, 59:52	136.46	School, beach, baseball, football & multi-use fields, track, 6 tennis courts, forest with trails	School Committee	Yes	Yes
6.6	Johnson Elementary School 99 South Main Street	51-284A/B	7.30	School, baseball field, basketball, playground	School Committee	Yes	Yes

⁷³ Portions of parcels 32-47A and 32-48 totalling 5.28 acres were transferred to the Conservation Commission by Town Meeting 11/7/2019 (see Conservation Commission listings), so these acres have been deducted from the School Department acres listed here.

TABLE 5-6
OTHER PUBLIC LANDS/UN-PROTECTED LANDS (Continued)

Site #	Location/ Description	Assessors Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
SCHOOLS/PLAYGROUNDS (Continued)							
6.7	Memorial Elementary School 107 Eliot Street	63-42A	24.98	School, 2 baseball & 2 soccer fields, basketball, 2 tennis courts, 2 playgrounds	School Committee	Yes	Yes
	Sub-Total: Schools/Playgrounds		226.78				
TOWN LAND (SELECTMEN)							
6.8	Indian Rock Road Adjoining Nonesuch Pond	04-97	2.815	No public access	Selectmen	Yes	No
6.9	15 Bayberry Road	12-85F	0.181	Water supply access	Selectmen	No	No
6.10	Whittier Rd Ext. ⁷⁴	15-153 15-155 15-157	0.57	Conservation, trail	Selectmen	Yes. 15-153 provides access to Cochituate Aqueduct	Yes
6.11	233 North Main Street	18-12	0.11	DPW	Selectmen	No	No
6.12	43 Centre Street	20-45A	.024	Emerson Path	Selectmen	No	No
6.13	West Natick Fire Station 268 Speen Street	25-247 (portion)	0.33 (portion)	Pocket park	Selectmen	Yes	No
6.14	322-324 Bacon Street ⁷⁵	26-131, 26-132	0.265	Vacant	Selectmen	Yes (adjacent to rail trail)	Yes

⁷⁴ May be owned by Conservation Commission. Adjacent to Cochituate Aqueduct

⁷⁵ Acquired 8/4/1999, Bk 30508 pg 603

TABLE 5-6
OTHER PUBLIC LANDS/UN-PROTECTED LANDS (Continued)

Site #	Location/ Description	Assessors Map/Lot#	Area (Acres)	Existing Uses/ Condition	Management Agency	Recreation Potential	Public Access
	TOWN LAND (SELECTMEN) (Continued)						
6.15	14 East Central Street	44-25, 44-26, 44-27, 44-32A, 44-32B	0.853	Morse Institute Library	Morse Institute Board of Trustees	No	No
6.16	132 Everett Street	71-3A	1.93	Vacant	Selectmen	No	No
6.17	59 Cottage Street	52-46A	0.275	Street and historic marker	Selectmen	No	Yes
6.18	Eliot School 5 Auburn Street	63-1	2.84	School bldg leased, playground, lawns, wetlands	Selectmen	Yes	No
6.19	Bacon Free Library/Natick History Museum 58 Eliot Street	63-24A, 63-24B	0.75	Library, historical museum, park	Bacon Free Library Board of Trustees	Yes	Yes
	Sub-Total: Selectmen		10.94				
	TOTAL PUBLIC UNPROTECTED LANDS		237.72				

Source: Natick Assessor's Office

Map 12 Pending

SECTION 6 – COMMUNITY VISION

A. Description of Process

Since the 2012 Plan was established, the Open Space Advisory Committee has been gathering ongoing feedback through its public outreach efforts. A significant amount of input surrounding open space and recreation was gathered throughout the Natick 2030+ Comprehensive Master Plan (February 2019) process. These outreach efforts included:

- 1 Online Survey targeted at Open Space & Recreation
- 3 Community-wide Public Meetings which included Open Space Resources
- 1 Roundtable with local Open Space & Natural Resources experts
- Project Website and Social Media
- Other opportunities including Town Meeting discussions, stakeholder meetings, and local community events

Due to the State of Emergency surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak and government mandated social distancing protocols, the Town utilized a variety of outreach methods in April and May 2020 with the goal of obtaining additional feedback on open space and recreation in the community and initial feedback on the 2020 OSRP Action Plan. Methods included:

- Recorded video presentation streamed online
- Online survey
- Photo campaign – send us your Natick open space/recreation photos!
- Zoom meeting presentations
 - Earth Week “Tent Talk”
 - Conservation Commission (broadcasted on the Government Channel)
 - Coffee With a Purpose
- Shoutouts at other Zoom meetings (Board of Selectmen, Recreation & Parks Commission, etc.)
- Facebook postings (Town of Natick and many other open space/trail group pages)
- Featured in the Town’s Sustainability Newsletter
- Email blasts to residents and stakeholders
- Flyer postings around the community
- Flyer distribution to Environmental Justice neighborhoods

The Draft 2020 OSRP was released for public comment on XX.

B. Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

The Goals in this plan are similar to those stated in the 2012 plan. One goal has been added (item 5), two have been enlarged (items 2 and 3), and others have been reworked in minor ways, based on the input received. The Goals make up the bones of the 2020 OSRP Action Plan.

1. Protect Natick's open spaces, including waterbodies, woodlands, farms, and parks, that can be enjoyed by future generations.
2. Enhance, steward, and restore existing natural resources, open spaces and recreational facilities.
3. Preserve and protect the town's water supply, wildlife, and other natural resources.
4. Provide a system of walking and bicycle trails that connect our open spaces and provide a way to travel throughout the town.
5. Increase awareness, appreciation, and use of the town's open spaces, trails, natural resources, and recreational opportunities



Hunnewell Fields in South Natick. Photo credit: Tzongshi Lu

SECTION 7 – ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

A. Summary of Resource Protection Needs

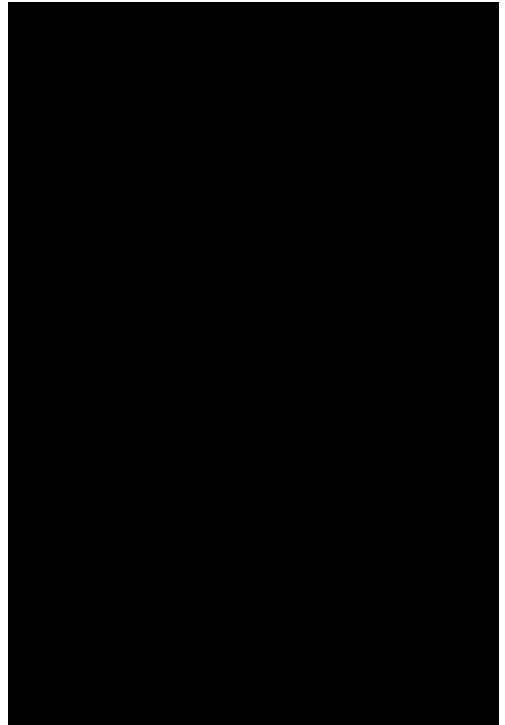
Most of Natick’s land has already been developed. There are only a few remaining larger tracts and smaller parcels of undeveloped land. The State Wetlands Protection Act and the Natick Wetlands Bylaw will protect most, if not all, of the remaining privately owned wetlands from direct development. However, development pressures the Town currently faces will negatively impact many wetlands through increased runoff from impervious surfaces and associated pollution, as well as pollution from pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers from newly-developed lawns.

In addition, the destruction of upland forest and field areas through development will negatively affect wildlife habitat. Deer, turkeys, foxes, woodpeckers, wood thrushes and many other upland species will be displaced.

Since Natick is mainly built out and many of the remaining undeveloped parcels are small or very wet, the community will need to think differently and creatively in regards to land conservation. That could mean aggregating smaller parcels together, reviewing Tax Title properties, considering purchasing properties with structures on it that may possess unique environmental characteristics, or utilizing zoning and land use tools to protect pockets of open space in new neighborhoods.

Natick’s population is growing, but unlike prior periods of growth, the current growth is more targeted to multi-family dwellings, clustered development, and utilizing already developed parcels. Natick is committed to “Smart Growth,” which provides housing for more residents with less of an impact on open space and natural resources. The Town needs to continue to utilize zoning bylaws to conserve additional areas in the community such as through Residential Cluster Zoning.

One priority in the preservation of the remaining open land is the protection of aquifers and the land through which they are recharged. The need to protect these areas is extremely high, given Natick’s dependence on groundwater for its water supply. Other priorities include protecting the last remaining large tracts of land such as those along the Charles River and Town Forest, and conserving areas in West Natick where underserved Environmental Justice neighborhoods are located (and have limited open space access today).



Many of our existing protected open spaces would be enhanced by improving and developing linkages between them. This is a common element that the community mentioned in the Natick 2030+ and 2020 OSRP outreach processes – connecting fragmented open spaces together. One example is the proposed Takawambpait Trail linking Natick Center with the Charles River in South Natick and open spaces in between. Besides providing the obvious recreational benefits, these linkages will maintain or restore Natick’s ecological network, by providing greenways and wildlife corridors. Eventually, these corridors could connect the Sudbury River (in Saxonville in Framingham) and Lake Cochituate with the Charles River via the Cochituate Rail Trail (under construction) and the Eisenmenger and Takawambpait trails.

In both the Natick 2030+ and 2020 OSRP outreach processes, the community responded strongly to conserving land areas in Natick for recreational use. When asked which needs are most important to address, Smart Growth and Land Protection rose to the top as “Very Important”.

Based on community input and staff knowledge, the priorities for open space protection can be summarized as follows:

- Create linkages between existing open spaces to provide both wildlife corridors and recreational trails for residents.
- Protect areas with environmental importance, particularly those adjacent to water bodies, within the floodplain, and areas with critical wildlife habitat.

B. Summary of Community’s Needs

Natick, like many eastern Massachusetts communities, is being faced with population growth, which results in demands for increased local recreational services. These include both active and passive recreation opportunities, which involve recreation programs and facilities alike. This in turn puts an increased demand on the community’s needs relative to open space and recreation. The following are the highest priority needs and were frequently mentioned in both the Natick 2030+ and 2020 OSRP public outreach processes. They are listed in no particular order.

1. Facility quantity and quality

As development has spread throughout the town, the need for more neighborhood recreational facilities has grown, especially in underserved neighborhoods like North and West Natick. In addition, the intense use of the existing facilities has resulted in the degradation of playing fields and outdoor facilities.

The Natick Recreation and Parks Department identifies the recreational needs in Natick as follows:

- 1) Improve maintenance of outdoor sites and facilities along with the development of existing areas to get the most recreational value from them.

- 2) Acquire additional land so as to provide a greater variety of facilities for the public use (active and passive recreation).
- 3) Develop more passive recreation opportunities in the community (trails, picnic areas, etc.).

Natick's playing fields are currently in maximum use, and are being damaged from overuse. Given the substantial increase in the youth recreation population in town, the introduction of new sports, like lacrosse, and the substantially increased demand for additional playing fields, Natick needs to look into the acquisition and/or lease arrangement for utilizing new lands throughout Natick. There are also active user groups for playing fields, and the need for fields continues to exceed the demands. More fields are needed.

The substantially increased demand for, and use of, existing recreation facilities has caused a deterioration of many of them. There is a need to improve maintenance of existing facilities to provide safe and adequate facilities. Irrigation systems should be developed where needed and existing facilities should be rested occasionally to allow renovation or rejuvenation.

Natick Recreation and Park's Master Plan for Parks and Fields (2016) contains additional information on active fields and facilities usage and recommended improvements.

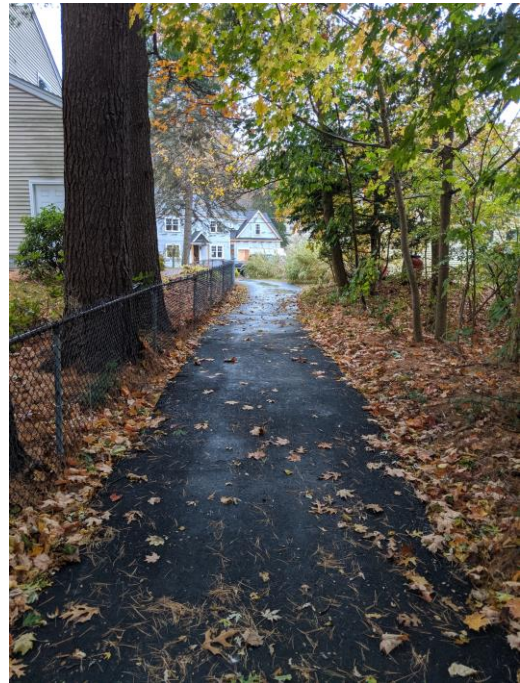


South Natick park facilities are in need of improvements. Photo credit: Rec & Parks

2. Trail connections

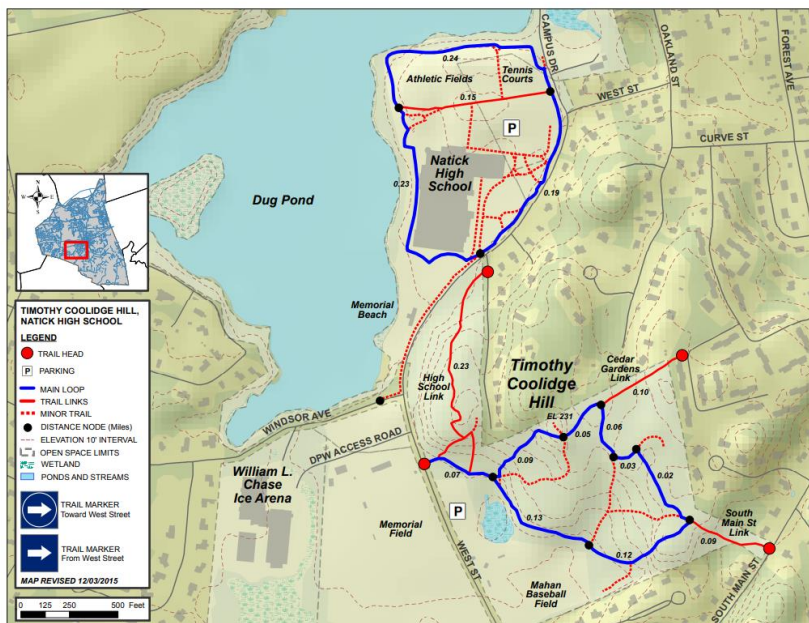
As mentioned earlier, the largest share of Natick's population growth over the past decade or so has occurred in large multi-family residential development, notably in the area around Natick

Mall. This includes Nouvelle (developed in conjunction with the mall), and nearby Cloverleaf and Avalon, east of Speen Street. This is a part of town that had no history of significant residential development and that offers little to no open space or recreation resources. The Cochituate Rail Trail, now under construction, fills a crucial need here by providing walking and biking opportunities and greater access to recreational facilities at Cochituate State Park. This trail will also serve residents of Modera, the multi-family development north of Natick Center, better connecting them to nearby Whitney Field and Pegan Cove.



Path connecting Oakridge neighborhood to Lilja School & Bacon Street. Photo credit: Marianne Iarossi

Passive recreation including trail walking and hiking continues to be an integral part of Natick residents' lives. This has led to the need for an expanded multi-purpose trail system. The Cochituate Rail Trail's completion later this year coupled with the Eisenmenger Trail, Tackawambpait Trail, Cochituate and Sudbury Aqueduct trails, and other trail systems located on open spaces, creates a good base trail system. Increasing connections to trails, open spaces, and neighborhoods was by far the most common input received from the public.



Existing trail map. Photo credit: Town website

The Cochituate and Sudbury aqueducts offer some scenic views through North Natick and South Natick, respectively. The public uses portions of the aqueducts now, but further use and improvements are possible such as developing the rest of the Sudbury Aqueduct to the Sherborn Town line for public use and increasing access along the aqueduct trail lengths.

3. Promotion

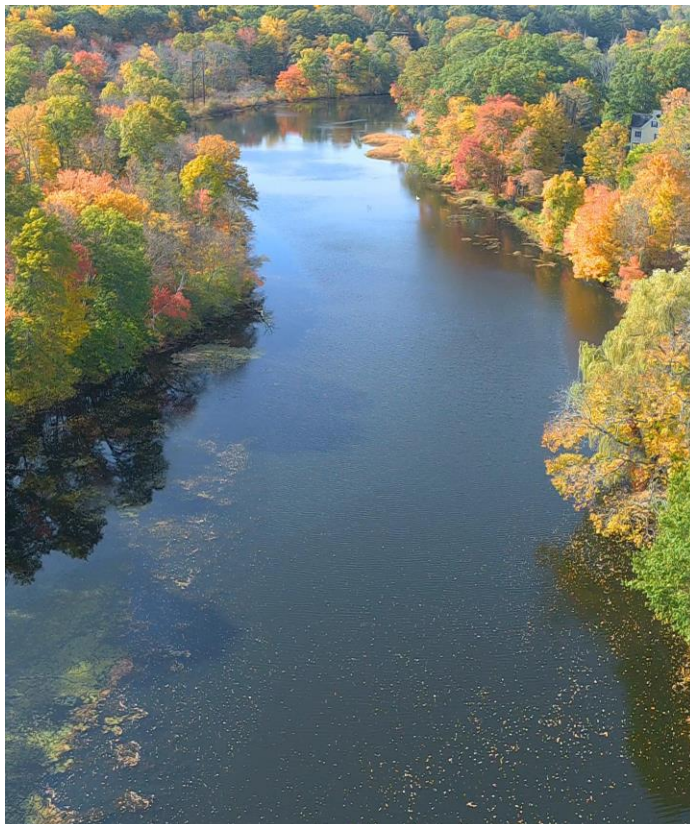
Many newcomers and a surprising number of longer-

term residents are unaware of existing open space and recreational opportunities. This became evident in the 2020 OSRP survey. Many Town-owned facilities are not identified by signs and are difficult to know how to access. Since the last OSRP Update, trail maps were created and distributed but this has proven to not be enough.

Ideas for promoting these resources better include creating an interactive online map, distributing trail/open space maps and brochures more widely, marketing these resources better such as through additional programming and defining trailheads with improved signage/parking areas.

4. Accessibility

Accessibility was another frequent mention throughout this process; both mobility-impaired accessibility and being able to more easily access the open spaces the Town has to offer by everyone.



Much of the land along the Charles River is privately owned. How can we increase public access? Photo credit: DPW drone

Natick's population, like that of the rest of the state is aging. Due to the perception by many of its residents that it provides a very good quality of life relative to its tax burden, many of the town residents decide to stay in town even after retirement. As much of the trail system as feasible has been made or is being made accessible to the mobility-challenged, but more needs to be done.

Residents have expressed the desire to have some trails in Town that are flat, stable, and easy to walk for the aging population. Marketing these trails successfully will be important so that our residents are aware of such assets. It is also worth noting, reconstruction of many of the major roads in town are providing better pedestrian access, including sidewalk and ramp access, especially as the Town is now a Complete Streets community. **Appendix C** provides a

detailed ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

The Town's tremendous inventory of open spaces needs to be accessible by everyone in the community. This means making it easier for our residents to access the open spaces in their neighborhoods. As previously mentioned, increasing neighborhood trail connections is of utmost

importance for the community. The Natick 2030+ process discovered that while nearly ninety percent of the land area of Natick is within one quarter mile of a public open space, less than half of the Town is within a quarter mile of a formal entrance or access point.

Increasing access to waterbodies for recreational use such as Lake Cochituate, the Charles River, Morses Pond, Dug Pond, and Fiske Pond are also important to the community. Much of the land surrounding these waterbodies are privately owned. The National Guard site lies on the shores of Lake Cochituate and could provide a much-needed addition to Lake Cochituate's recreational uses. The *Cochituate State Park Management Plan* urges that, should this property become surplus, the state should make every effort to add it to Cochituate State Park. The Town envisions a river trail along the Charles River and has been working with property owners over the years to obtain easements and Conservation Restrictions along the River. Smaller waterbodies such as Morses Pond are great neighborhood assets but their access by the general public needs to be considered and strengthened.

5. Other needs

Other needs expressed during the public outreach process and by Town staff and committees include the following:

- Provide pocket parks, community gardens, green spaces, and recreational opportunities in high-density parts of town, particularly West Natick and downtown.
- Create connections particularly suited for bicycles (mountain bike trails, bike lanes).
- Provide organized walks so people can become more familiar with the trails.
- Create pickleball courts and tot lots.
- Create trails to link historic sites (such as the Henry Wilson History Trail), with appropriate historic markings.
- Increase the tree canopy and design better laws surrounding tree removal.
- Integrate better enforcement to discourage illegal activity by youth and illegal dumping.



Creating more bike connections is a community priority. Photo credit: Mark Polette

C. Management Needs

In Natick there has consistently been a need to better delineate responsibilities related to management, trails, planning, promotion, etc. Since the last OSRP update, a Trails Maintenance Committee and Town Forest Committee held some of these responsibilities along with the Open Space Advisory Committee. There has not been an entity responsible for management or stewardship of open space properties across Town though. Recently, discussions revolved around reenergizing some of these groups while considering how stewardship fits into their roles. In April 2020, the Conservation Commission voted to dissolve both the Trails Maintenance Committee and Town Forest Committee and establish a new Trails and Forest Stewardship Committee (TaFS). In May 2020, new members were being solicited for TaFS. Their initial tasks will include some of the management needs outlined below.

Maintaining the Town's open spaces and recreational facilities is a priority need in the community. Currently, the Land Facilities and Natural Resources division of DPW assists the Recreation and Parks Department with maintenance of active facilities. The Conservation Commission does not have dedicated maintenance staff but does have the support of a large number of volunteers for passive facilities and trails maintenance. To better manage these spaces, a Management Plan is needed that includes specific tasks (both short and long term maintenance and improvements), who is responsible, and what resources are required. In addition, it should document the trail and open space stewards that the Town is fortunate to rely on.

Dog waste, illegal dumping of leaf litter, trash from trail users or abutting uses are all frequent problems seen in the open spaces and recreational areas in Town.



*Being better stewards includes addressing improvements to trails, such as washout of this Pickerel Pond trail.
Photo credit: Marianne Iarossi*

The *Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest* (Section 5) is the only central place to find all of Natick's Conservation Restrictions, Deed Restrictions, trail easements, Chapter 61 lands, and other protected open spaces. This information needs to be formatted into a working database, made readily available to boards/committees, and parcels need to be crossreferenced with the Registry of Deeds (to confirm Article 97 protections) and the Town Assessor data (for GIS mapping purposes).

While many of Natick's boards and agencies work well together, there is a clear need for improved communication among them. One example is that, in the past, properties have been withdrawn from the Chapter 61 program, but interested boards, like the Conservation Commission, had not received notice of their change. The Board of Selectmen and the

Assessor's Office should be encouraged to notify the Conservation Commission and the Open Space Advisory Committee of any change in the status of any protected parcel.



*Natick is fortunate to have the continuous assistance of volunteers who live and work in the Town.
Photo credit: Martin Kessel (left), Pat Conaway (right)*

SECTION 8 – OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the community needs that were identified, we further developed our overall vision with the following goals and objectives:

- 1. Protect Natick’s open spaces, including waterbodies, woodlands, farms, and parks, that can be enjoyed by future generations**
 - 1-A Protect privately held open space through acquisition, conservation/agricultural restrictions, easements, and other means
 - 1-B Permanently protect public and quasi-public open space
 - 1-C Develop internal revenue streams for open space protection
 - 1-D Develop and maintain zoning and land use tools to protect open space
- 2. Enhance, steward, and restore existing natural resources, open spaces and recreational facilities**
 - 2-A Improve existing fields and recreation facilities
 - 2-B Develop town-owned land or secure additional land for fields and recreation activities
 - 2-C Develop baseline inventory and encroachment monitoring program for conservation lands
 - 2-D Develop Land Management Plan for conservation lands
 - 2-E Engage residents, businesses, and other groups as active stewards or sponsors
- 3. Preserve and protect the town’s water supply, wildlife, and other natural resources**
 - 3-A Improve ecological habitats
 - 3-B Limit use of toxic substances on natural resources town-wide
- 4. Provide a system of walking and bicycle trails that connect our open spaces and provide a way to travel throughout the town**
 - 4-A Acquire land or secure easements to provide continuous walking and bicycling trails, to be used both for recreation and transportation
 - 4-B Develop and mark new and existing trails
- 5. Increase awareness, appreciation, and use of the town’s open spaces, trails, natural resources, and recreational opportunities**
 - 5-A Use marketing tools to publicize the location, amenities, and availability of open spaces
 - 5-B Promote universal access for trails, recreation facilities, and conservation areas
 - 5-C Promote coordination among the various town boards, commissions, and departments responsible for open spaces

SECTION 9: ACTION PLAN

The following table summarizes the key recommended actions the Town of Natick should undertake to address its open space and recreation needs and goals over the next seven years. The actions were determined based off community feedback, prior Natick Open Space & Recreation Plans, and staff input. The table also identifies the lead agency and supporting agencies (if any) for each recommendation, a schedule for implementation, and possible funding sources, where applicable. **Map 13** illustrates the Action Plan.

Acronyms List:

BOH: Board of Health
BOS: Board of Selectmen
CED: Community and Economic Development Department
ConCom: Conservation Commission
DPW: Department of Public Works
GIS: Geographic Information Systems
FAR: Floor Area Ratio
MVP: Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program
NAHT: Natick Affordable Housing Trust
NCOF: Natick Community Organic Farm
OSAC: Open Space Advisory Committee
PB: Planning Board
TaFS: Trails and Forest Stewardship Committee
TT: Tax Title
ZBA: Zoning Board of Appeals

2020 Natick OSRP - Seven-Year Action Plan (2020-2027)						
#	Objective	Action	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Possible Funding	Target Date
Goal 1: Protect Natick’s open spaces, including waterbodies, woodlands, farms, and parks, that can be enjoyed by future generations						
1.A.1	A. Protect privately held open space through acquisition, conservation/agricultural restrictions, easements, and other means	(1) Pursue opportunities for land protection especially those properties identified on the "Open Space Interest List"	ConCom	OSAC	FAR Stabilization Fund; Mitigation; Grants: LAND, PARC, LWCF	Ongoing
1.A.2		(2) Update the "Open Space Interest List"	OSAC	CED	-	Ongoing
1.A.3		(3) Review the Tax Title list for land protection opportunities	CED	OSAC	-	Annually
1.A.4		(4) Keep track of Chapter 61 properties and ensure OSAC and ConCom are notified of "right of first refusal" events	CED	Assessor	-	Annually
1.A.5		(5) Secure open space as part of the permitting process	PB	ZBA, ConCom	-	Ongoing
1.B.1	B. Permanently protect public and quasi-public open space	(1) Preserve open space in perpetuity held by the Town which are not already protected	OSAC	BOS	-	2022-2023
1.C.1	C. Develop internal revenue streams for open space protection	(1) Seek payments to the FAR Stabilization Fund and other mitigation from developers	PB	ZBA, ConCom	-	Ongoing
1.C.2		(2) Consider adopting the Community Preservation Act (CPA)	BOS	All	-	2021-2027
1.D.1	D. Develop and maintain zoning and land use tools to protect open space	(1) Ensure that new zoning bylaws encourage the set aside of open space, trail easements, FAR Stabilization Fund payments, etc.	CED	PB	-	Ongoing
1.D.2		(2) Require submission of a digital conservation/trail easement boundary plan once it is recorded as part of the permitting process	CED	PB, DPW GIS	-	Ongoing
1.D.3		(3) Update Aquifer Protection District Bylaw	CED	PB	-	2021
Goal 2: Enhance, steward, and restore existing natural resources, open spaces and recreational facilities						
2.A.1	A. Improve existing fields and recreation facilities	(1) Make necessary improvements to South Natick parks (Grove Park, Multi-purpose Courts, etc.)	Rec & Parks	-	MVP Grant; PARC Grant; Town budget	2022
2.B.1	B. Develop town-owned land or secure additional land for fields and recreation activities	(1) Create pocket parks with priority for densest neighborhoods	Rec & Parks	CED	Mitigation; Grants; TT list for ops	2025
2.B.2		(2) Create community gardens with priority for densest neighborhoods	CED	Rec & Parks, ConCom, NCOF	Grants; TT list for ops	2024
2.B.3		(3) Recreate field adjacent to Natick Community Senior Center	Rec & Parks	Senior Center	Town budget	2021
2.B.4		(4) Identify public non-motorized boat storage and boat launch opportunities at Lake Cochituate and the Charles River	Rec & Parks	-	-	2026
2.B.5		(5) Improve public access to Morses Pond	ConCom	OSAC	Town budget	2024
2.C.1	C. Develop baseline inventory and encroachment monitoring program for conservation lands	(1) Develop a baseline inventory and address encroachments at each Conservation Commission owned property	ConCom	-	Town budget	2020
2.D.1	D. Develop Land Management Plan for conservation lands	(1) Develop Land Management Plan for Conservation Commission owned property including invasive species, ecological habitat improvements, annual budget requirements, etc.	ConCom	TaFS	Town budget	2021
2.E.1	E. Engage residents, businesses, and other groups as active stewards or sponsors	(1) Develop a Trails and Land Stewards program including a database of active stewards assigned to each open space/trail, an online steward sign-up and report a problem form, tracking of stewardship hours, etc.	TaFS	OSAC, CED, ConCom	-	2021
2.E.2		(2) Engage volunteer groups in open space and trail work	OSAC	TaFS	-	Ongoing
Goal 3. Preserve and protect the town’s water supply, wildlife, and other natural resources						
3.A.1	A. Improve ecological habitats	(1) Develop Invasive Species Management Plan for the Hunnewell Town Forest	ConCom	-	CISMA grant	2020
3.A.2		(2) Work towards eradication of invasive species in the Hunnewell Town Forest	ConCom	-	Town budget; CISMA grant	Ongoing
3.A.3		(3) Develop invasive species public education campaign surrounding their identification and eradication	ConCom	-	Town budget; Educational grants	2024
3.A.4		(4) Establish a pollinator garden program. Install one new pollinator garden	ConCom	Sustainability Com	Town budget; Grants: CISMA, MHMGP	2025
3.A.5		(5) Install three new green infrastructure projects on Town-owned land as recommended in the 2018 Lake Cochituate Watershed-Based Plan and the 2018 CRB (MVP) Plan	CED	ConCom, DPW, Sustainability Com	Town budget; MAPC Mini-Grants	2021-2027

2020 Natick OSRP - Seven-Year Action Plan (2020-2027)						
#	Objective	Action	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Possible Funding	Target Date
3.B.1	B. Limit use of toxic substances on natural resources town-wide	(1) Develop a discouraged and recommended list of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers. Share the list on the Town website, social media, with permit applicants, with landscaping companies, etc.	ConCom	BOH, Building Dept, DPW	Town budget	2024
3.B.2		(2) Establish a residential public education campaign surrounding toxic uses, their impact on natural resources, stormwater's role, lawn size, etc.	ConCom	BOH, Sustainability Com	Town budget; Educational grants	2026
3.B.3		(3) Pilot a goatscaping project on Town-owned land targeting invasive species removal	ConCom	Rec & Parks, NCOF	Town budget	2021
Goal 4. Provide a system of walking and bicycle trails that connect our open spaces and provide a way to travel throughout the town						
4.A.1	A. Acquire land or secure easements to provide continuous walking and bicycling trails, to be used both for recreation and transportation	(1) Explore use of utility easements and paper streets for trails	CED	OSAC	-	2023
4.A.2		(2) Improve and expand open space access points prioritizing residential neighborhoods and connections shown in Map 7.10 in the Natick 2030+ Plan	CED	DPW, PB, ZBA, ConCom	Mitigation; Town budget	Ongoing
4.A.3		(3) Explore options for additional Lake Cochituate trail access especially along southeastern and southwestern edges	TaFS	CED	-	2025
4.A.4		(4) Complete Takawambpait Trail	TAFS	CED	Town budget	2026
4.B.1	B. Develop and mark new and existing trails	(1) Develop and implement trail construction standards, including marking, bridges, signage, walkways and surfaces, etc.	TaFS	OSAC, ConCom	-	2022
4.B.2		(2) Add new Henry Wilson trail sign on Route 135 and historic markers/signage along trail	TaFS	OSAC	Town budget	2021
4.B.4		(3) Complete Sudbury Aqueduct from Cottage Street to the Sherborn Town Line	TaFS	CED	Town budget; MassTrails Grant	2023
4.B.5		(5) Develop last Cochituate Rail Trail segment from the current proposed terminus to the MBTA Station	CED	-	MassTrails Grant	2022
4.B.6		(6) Connect north Pickerel Pond with south Pickerel Pond via a boardwalk trail system	ConCom	TaFS	FAR Stabilization Fund; LWCF Grant	2022
4.B.7		(7) Develop parking area and improve trail head for the Pine Hill area, Winter Woods, and Pickerel Pond	ConCom	-	Town budget; Grants	2021, 2023, 2025
4.B.8		(8) Collaborate with neighboring communities to develop Charles River Blue Trail	ConCom	Rec & Parks	-	2026
4.B.9		(9) Continue to implement offsite wayfinding signs to trails, kiosks at trailheads, pet waste bag dispensers, etc.	TaFS	OSAC	Town budget	Ongoing
Goal 5. Increase awareness, appreciation, and use of the town’s open spaces, trails, natural resources, and recreational opportunities						
5.A.1	A. Use marketing tools to publicize the location, amenities, and availability of open spaces	(1) Update town-wide open space and trail maps and provide them online and in print. Place at strategic locations in town.	OSAC	CED, TaFS	Town budget	2024
5.A.2		(2) Sponsor trail walks and canoe or bicycle trips to introduce people to the available opportunities	TaFS	OSAC	-	Ongoing
5.A.3		(3) Participate in Natick Days and other town events to promote these resources	OSAC	CED, TaFS	-	Ongoing
5.A.4		(4) Optimize cross-promotion of events among the open space and trails related organizations in town	OSAC	All	-	Ongoing
5.B.1	B. Promote universal access for trails, recreation facilities, and conservation areas	(1) Create a fully inclusive park and playground	Rec & Parks	Disability Com	PARC Grant	2025
5.B.2		(2) Indicate accessibility levels in brochures, maps, and other public materials and provide them online and in print.	OSAC	CED, TaFS, Disability Com	Town budget	2024
5.B.3		(3) Conduct additional open space and trails promotion/outreach to Environmental Justice neighborhoods	CED	OSAC, TaFS, NAHT	Town budget	2024
5.B.4		(4) Consider joining the "10-Minute Walk Campaign" to commit to ensure all residents are within a 10-minute walk to an open space/park.	CED	Town Administrator	-	2021
5.B.5		(5) Improve 1-2 trails to be more mobility-impaired accessible (flat, stable walking surface)	TaFS	OSAC, ConCom	-	2022
5.C.1	C. Promote coordination among the various town boards, commissions, and departments responsible for open spaces	(1) Track progress on this Action Plan and report annually to relevant Town boards and committees	OSAC	CED	-	Annually
5.C.2		(2) Encourage communications among boards, committees, neighboring communities, and other related organizations.	CED	OSAC	-	Ongoing

Map 13 Pending

SECTION 10: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Letters from the following are attached:

Board of Selectmen
Planning Board
Conservation Commission
Recreation and Parks Commission
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Pending

SECTION 11: REFERENCES

Blanchan, Neltje (2005). [Wild Flowers Worth Knowing](#), [Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation](#).

Charles River Watershed Association (1981) Charles River Corridor Plan

Crawford, Michael J. (1978) History of Natick Massachusetts, 1650-1976, Natick Historical Commission

Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs. Waste Site & Reportable Releases Data Portal. (2019)

Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) Labor Force & Unemployment Data (November 2019)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (2010) Middlesex County Flood Insurance Study

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Report. (2003)

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Year 2016 Integrated List of Waters.

Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (2004)

Massachusetts Department of Revenue (2008) Division of Local Services, Municipal Data Bank

Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services (2008) Open Space & Recreation Planner's Workbook

Massachusetts, Division of Employment and Training (2008) (MassStats)

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program. The Nature Conservancy. BioMap2 Report (2010)

Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG) (2019)

Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information Systems (2020) Executive Office of Administration and Finance

McAdow, Ron. The Charles River, Exploring Nature and History on Foot and by Canoe. (1999)

Metropolitan Area Planning Council Population Forecasts (2006) and Landline (2018)

Pedevillano, Cathy (1995) Habitat Values of New England Wetlands, Army Corps of Engineers Waltham, MA

Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (2008) Natick 360 – Strategic Plan 2008-2012

Town of Natick 2030+ Comprehensive Master Plan (2019)

Town of Natick Assessor's Office (2019) Property records

Town of Natick Department of Public Works (2020) GIS Division

Town of Natick Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018)

Town of Natick Master Plan for Parks and Fields. Recreation and Parks Department. (2016)

Town of Natick Open Space and Recreation Plans (2002, 2012)

United States Census Data (1990, 2000, and 2010 decennial census, 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)

United States Department of Agriculture (undated) Soil Survey of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office

United States Department of Commerce (various years) U.S. Census, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office

University of Massachusetts – Amherst (various years) Resource Mapping Project, Department of Forestry

APPENDIX

- A. Accomplishments Since 2012 Plan
- B. Community Outreach
- C. ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan

Appendix A

Accomplishments Since 2012 Plan

ACTION PLAN SUMMARY
From the Town of Natick 2012 Open Space and Recreation Plan
With Accomplishments Since 2011

Note: Appendix A to the 2012 Open Space & Recreation Plan includes a chart similar to this, listing accomplishments since the 2002 Plan through October 2011. The list below continues with accomplishments after that point.

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
Goal 1: Protect Natick's open spaces, including lakes, rivers, streams, woodlands, farms, and parks, that can be enjoyed by future generations					
1-A Protect privately held open space through acquisition, conservation restrictions, easements, and other means					
(1) Protect key open space parcels using the Conservation Fund and other available funds	ConCom	OSAC	N/A	2012-18	Conservation Fund, mitigation negotiation
<p><i>Because of newly discovered legal issues, on Nov. 15, 2015, Town Meeting transferred most of the Conservation Fund into a new "FAR Bonus Stabilization Fund," with the same general purpose of acquiring open space but controlled by Town Meeting instead of the Conservation Commission.</i></p> <p><i><u>Pegan Hill:</u> On Dec, 1, 2015, Town Meeting appropriated \$1 million from borrowing to purchase a conservation restriction on a 16-acre parcel at the top of Pegan Hill, enabling The Trustees of Reservations to purchase this parcel for \$3.3 million to add to its existing Pegan Hill Reservation. A few months earlier, Dover Land Conservation Trust purchased the adjacent 24-acre parcel for \$3.5 million. The Trustees now manage this land, along with the adjacent 26-acre Mumford Wildlife Forest, resulting in 100 acres open to the public, plus surrounding land protected under Conservation Restrictions but not open to the public. The Trustees held a public opening on June 25, 2016.</i></p> <p><i><u>Cochituate Rail Trail:</u> The Town purchased the railroad right-of-way in 2016 – See Item 4-A(1).</i></p> <p><i><u>22 Pleasant St.</u> Money for a third major purchase was authorized in 2016 but then rescinded in 2019. On May 5, 2016, Town Meeting appropriated \$3.2 million from borrowing to purchase the 4.1 acre riverfront parcel at 22 Pleasant Street to add to the existing 11.2 acre Hunnewell baseball fields, but, after unsuccessful negotiations by the Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting rescinded this appropriation on November 17, 2019.</i></p>					

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(2) Secure open space as part of the permitting process	Planning Board	ZBA; ConCom	Permitting process	2012-18	N/A
<i>In 2018, the Planning Board approved the 26-acre McHugh Farms subdivision, which includes 50 percent open space, a trail connecting Rockland and Cottage streets, and several side trails.</i>					
(3) Actively encourage landowners to put land under conservation restrictions or Agricultural Preservation Restriction	OSAC or ConCom	CDO; Town Administrator; BOS	Buy or gift	2012	Mitigation funds; donation
<i>In 2018, the Town approved two new conservation restrictions (CRs), both expanding existing CRs donated by members of the Hunnewell family. In April, the Selectmen approved a new CR from the late Morgan Palmer, which protects 35 acres in addition to 30 acres already protected under two prior CRs. In December the Selectmen approved an amendment to Arnold Hunnewell's CR, adding 5 acres to the 55 acres that were already protected.</i>					
(4) Review appropriateness of utility easements and "paper" streets for open space	OSAC; Trails Comm.	CDO	Need legal clarification of Town title	2012-13	
<i>The Town has formally recognized the use of paper streets as walking paths – see item 4-A(6). There has been no progress on use of utility easements.</i>					
1-B Permanently protect public and quasi-public open space					
(1) Preserve open space held by the Town that is not already protected as open space	ConCom	School Comm; BOS	Discuss with BOS	2012-18	N/A
<i>On April 8, 2014, Town Meeting voted to take by eminent domain and protect under Article 97 the area in South Natick known as Shaw Park, which had been donated to the Town in the 1930s but had not been properly recorded. Two days later, Town Meeting transferred the large parcel of land near Pickerel Pond under control of DPW (used for a water pumping station) to Conservation Commission, protecting the land and offering opportunity for public trails. The ConCom already owned remaining parcels in this area, also known as the Sunkaway.</i>					
(2) Work with state and federal agencies to ensure protection of future surplus properties, including the National Guard Depot	BOS; Town Administrator	ConCom; Fire/Police; Rec & Parks; state officials	Negotiations	2012-18	Conservation Fund; other
<i>The northern portion of the National Guard site was leased by the Town as part of the expanded J.J. Lane Park. See item 2-B(5).</i>					

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(3) Continue to work with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority regarding preservation of land along the Cochituate and Sudbury Aqueducts	ConCom	OSAC; Coch Aqueduct; Advisory Comm	Existing committees	2012-18	N/A
<i>On May 22, 2012 the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority announced it would begin making its aqueducts available for public walking trails. Natick quickly secured permits to use both the Sudbury and Cochituate Aqueducts. See items 4.A(3) and (4) for development of these trails.</i>					
1-C Develop potential revenue streams for open space preservation					
(1) Continue to seek payments to the Conservation Fund and other mitigation from developers	Planning Board	ConCom	Board practices and policies	2012-18	Mitigation
(2) Assess community interest, and if appropriate take steps for a new Town-wide vote on the Community Preservation Act	Selectmen	OSAC; Historic Comm; Housing Auth	Town Meeting; Ballot question	2012-18	Tax
<i>An exploratory group, which included representatives from each of the CPA's four components, met from 2014 to 2015, but has not taken any further action.</i>					
1-D Seek federal, state, and private grants to preserve additional open space for the town					
(1) MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation	Selectmen	Rec & Parks; OSAC; CDO	CDO to seek grants; sync w/ related grants secured by others	2012-18	Grants
(2) Massachusetts LAND and PARC programs	ConCom	OSAC; CDO	CDO to seek grants	2012-18	Grants
<i>Natick applied for LAND funding for the Pegan Hill purchase, item 1-A(1), but was not successful. However, The Trustees of Reservation made up the shortfall.</i>					
(3) Others	CDO	ConCom; OSAC	Reactive	2012-18	Grants
1-E Develop and maintain zoning and land use tools to protect open space					
(1) Ensure that new zoning bylaws encourage the set aside of open space, trail easements, Conservation Fund payments, etc.	CDO; Participating boards	OSAC	Specifications for new zoning bylaws	2012-14	N/A

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(2) Ensure the public receives open space benefits during site plan reviews by Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals	Planning Board; ConCom; ZBA	OSAC	Secure trail easements, open space as approp	2012-18	N/A
<i>See item 1-A(2)</i>					
1-F For all above Objectives, prioritize: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas that enhance existing open spaces, by creating larger contiguous parcels or connecting existing open space, neighborhoods, trails, or wildlife corridors • Open space in areas of the town currently deficient in open space • Areas adjacent to rivers and ponds and environmentally sensitive areas • Areas of historic significance • Priority wildlife habitats • Farm land, fallow land, and other open space that may be made available for farming use by license, lease or deed restriction 					
(1) Classify all considered parcels by these criteria	OSAC	ConCom; Environmental Compliance Ofcr	Database (non-public)	2012-18	N/A
(2) Hold periodic meetings among relevant Town boards to rank the priority of specific parcels	OSAC	Planning Board; ConCom	Joint meetings	2012-18	N/A
Goal 2: Provide and maintain playing fields and other recreational facilities that support the needs of the population					
<i>Items under Goal 2 are generally the responsibility of the Recreation and Parks Commission, which can provide more information on progress toward these goals. Much information is provided in the Master Plan for Parks and Fields, completed by consultants Weston & Sampson in 2016.</i>					
2-A Maintain existing fields and recreation facilities					
(1) Develop and implement a management plan, as described in Goal 7	Recreation and Parks Dept.	DPW; Town Administrator	Review regularly to ensure implementation	Ongoing	Town budget, Conservation Fund

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
<p><i>Covered by the Park and Fields Master Plan. The top priorities in the Master Plan were East Park and Navy Yard Field. Weston & Sampson worked with a design committee and held several neighborhood hearings. Fall 2017 Town Meeting appropriated \$4,135,000 for a complete rebuild of these two parks. Construction was essentially completed by fall 2019, and we are expecting a spring 2020 dedication. The Board of Selectmen has voted to rename both parks. East was named Connor Heffler Park, and Navy Yard was named Whitney Field at the Navy Yard."</i></p>					
2-B As needed, develop town-owned land or secure additional land for fields and recreation activities					
(1) Conduct periodic needs assessment for different current and future uses	Recreation and Parks Dept.	OSAC	Annual review of Plan	Annual	N/A
(2) Create additional tennis courts	Recreation and Parks Dept.		Annual review of Plan	Annual	Town budget
(3) Create pocket parks, with priority for densest neighborhoods, particularly downtown	Recreation and Parks Dept.	OSAC	Review density v. open space at "microscopic" level; involve neighborhood	1 neighborhood every 2 months	Conservation Fund, Grants
(4) Develop land for community gardens with priority for densest neighborhoods	Recreation and Parks Dept.	ConCom; OSAC	Review density v. open space at "microscopic" level; involve neighborhood	2 neighborhoods per year	
<p><i>Community Gardens are open at J.J. Lane Park, Hartford Street, and have been created at the new Whitney Field (at the Navy Yard). Additional areas are being considered during the design process for priority areas covered in the Parks and Fields Master Plan.</i></p>					
(5) Develop J.J. Lane and adjacent leased land	Recreation and Parks Dept.	CDO	Prioritization of parcel usage	2012-13	Conservation Fund, Grants, Town Meeting
<p><i>After an extensive public design process, construction took place, with a "soft opening" on May 26, 2014, and a formal dedication on April 26, 2015. This park truly provides something for everyone, with playground, walking trails, picnic areas, informal lawn play, etc.</i></p>					
(6) Re-create field adjacent to new community center	Recreation and Parks Dept.	Community Ctr Bldg Comm	p/o Bldg Comm	2012-13	Community Center bonds
<p><i>Fall 2016 Town Meeting approved funding for a design study, but progress has apparently been delayed..</i></p>					

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(7) Create dedicated dog parks	Recreation and Parks Dept.	OSAC	Resident groups as catalyst	2012-13	TBD
<i>The OSAC heard from many people about the need for a dog park, and brought everyone together in a public forum on Oct. 10, 2013. This meeting led to the formation of a citizens' group called FIDO of Natick, which researched possible site, possible grant funding, and conducted fundraising. The Town's Office of Community & Economic Development obtained major funding from the Stanton Foundation. After extensive public hearings and Conservation Commission approval, groundbreaking was held August 29, 2019, with opening expected in spring 2020.</i>					
(8) Enhance public access to Charles River, Lake Cochituate and water bodies with consideration of parking, signage and site improvements	Recreation and Parks Dept.	OSAC		2012-15	TBD
(9) Explore public boat storage opportunities	Recreation and Parks Dept.	OSAC		2012-15	TBD
Goal 3: Preserve and protect the town's water supply, wildlife, and other natural resources					
<i>Items under Goal 3 are the responsibility of the Conservation Commission, which can provide more information on progress towards these goals. Additionally, in 2014 the Town Administrator hired Jillian Wilson Martin for a new position, Sustainability Coordinator, to work on some of these issues.</i>					
3-A Protect open space near water resources and the Aquifer Protection District					
(1) Protect land around these areas	ConCom	MA DCR	Various	Ongoing	N/A
(2) Limit the allowed activities near water resource areas and within the APD	ConCom; Planning Bd; ZBA	MA DCR	Zoning Bylaws	Ongoing	N/A
(3) Explore creating open space districts to buffer large bodies of water, using conservation restrictions, zoning, overlay districts, or other means	CDO and associated boards	Zoning consultants	Zoning bylaws	2012-14	N/A
3-B Limit use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers townwide					
(1) Maintain lists of discouraged and recommended items	ConCom	Board of Health	Social media; outreach, events; Natick Pegasus	2012; annual update	Town Budget
(2) Limit use of non-organic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers by the Town	ConCom Board of Health	DPW	DPW Board of Health	Ongoing	Town Budget

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
<i>The Town is doing this, although we don't have details.</i>					
(3) Provide information to discourage such use by private parties, particularly in the APD and near water bodies	CDO	Board of Health; DPW	Social media; outreach, events; Natick Pegasus	Onoging	Town Budget
(4) Promote use of organic fertilizers and Integrated Pest Management	CDO	Health Dept; DPW	Social media; outreach, events; Natick Pegasus	Ongoing	Town Budget
(5) Provide public education regarding limiting lawn size, maintenance and water	CDO BOS (as Water Commission)	Health Dept; DPW	Social media; outreach, events; Natick Pegasus	Ongoing	Town Budget
(6) Promote use of environmentally-friendly grasses					
3-C Support environmental best practices in storm water management					
(1) Provide regular maintenance of drainage	DPW	ConCom		Ongoing	Town Budget
(2) Put signs on catch basins indicating where the water ends up	DPW	ConCom	Eagle Scout proj?	ASAP	Town Budget
(3) Promote use of rain gardens, porous pavement and other practices to promote aquifer recharge	Planning Board	ConCom			
3-D Foster wildlife corridors and preserve habitats					
(1) Work with Mass Audubon, the state's Natural Heritage program, and schools to identify critical habitats	ConCom; Environmental Compliance Officer	Mass Audubon, State School Dept	Review of maps; walks; data and base creation & usage	Ongoing	?
(2) Develop signage to alert the public of critical habitats	ConCom	OSAC	Request DPW	?	?

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
Goal 4: Provide a system of walking and bicycle trails that connect our open spaces and provide a way to travel throughout the town					
4-A Acquire land or secure easements to provide continuous walking and bicycling trails, to be used both for recreation and transportation					
(1) Acquire and develop the Cochituate Rail Trail	BOS; Cochituate Rail Trail Adv Comm	ConCom; OSAC	In process	2012-18	Conservation Fund, grants
<i>The Board of Selectmen, with advice from the Cochituate Rail Trail Advisory Committee has continued to work with BETA Group to develop a design for the Rail trail and to negotiate with CSX for purchase of the right-of-way. Town Meeting consistently approved use of mitigation funds for rail trail design; on Apr. 12, 2016 voted to take the so-called Wonder Bread Spur by eminent domain; and on Nov. 3, 2016 appropriated \$3.1 from FAR Fund and \$2.96 million from borrowing to purchase the CSX right-of-way. Groundbreaking took place on July 19, 2019, with completion expected in 2021.</i>					
(2) Complete Takawambpait Trail	OSAC	Trails Maint Committee	Negotiations	2012-14	Conservation Fund, fundraising
<i>This has not been accomplished due to difficulties in negotiating several easements across private property.</i>					
(3) Ensure public access to Sudbury Aqueduct	ConCom	MWRA	Discuss w/MWRA	2012-13	N/A
<i>The Sudbury Aqueduct had been used unofficially by the public for years between Memorial School and Cottage Street. As mentioned in item 1-B(3), on May 22, 2012 the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority announced that it would begin permitting its aqueducts as public walking trails. Natick quickly secured permits to use both the Sudbury and Cochituate Aqueducts. Formal opening ceremony for the Sudbury Aqueduct was held by head of MWRA and Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs on April 24, 2014. OSAC has explored feasibility of extending the trail further west but has not resolved issues regarding the right-of-way through Hopewell Farms.</i>					
(4) Continue to explore and if appropriate develop the Cochituate Aqueduct	ConCom	Cochituate Aqueduct Study Comm	Discuss w/MWRA	2012-15	Conservation Fund, grants, fundraising

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
<p><i>In 2012 the Cochituate Aqueduct Study Committee endorsed the findings of consultants, Weston & Sampson, that such a trail is feasible. That committee was disbanded and the Conservation Commission took over the process of developing a detailed design. Special Town Meeting on December 1, 2012, considered funding construction for \$600,000, but because of unanswered questions did not act. Instead the ConCom decided to create a far simpler trail using volunteers, which occurred during Natick Trails Day on October 22, 2016. Further improvements to the trail were made at Natick Trails Days on October 21, 2017 and October 19, 2019, and at several additional volunteer efforts. Most notably, in September 2018, an Eagle Scout project completed a bridge across a Pickerel Pond inlet that joined the Wethersfield neighborhood to East Natick for the first time. As envisioned in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council LandLine Vision, the Cochituate Aqueduct Trail now consists of 1.3 miles in Natick, through Wellesley and into Newton, for a total of about 12 miles.</i></p>					
(5) Explore use of utility easements for trails	ConCom; CDO	OSAC; Trails Comm	Legal opinion from Town Counsel	2012-14	N/A
(6) Explore use of “paper” streets for trails	OSAC	CDO; Trails Comm	Legal opinion from Town Counsel	2012-14	N/A
<p><i>Some paper streets have been used informally as pedestrian connectors, and in 2011 the Conservation Commission purchased a house lot on Craigie Street for a similar purpose. In 2016 the Board of Selectmen formally named these connections, now called “walking paths,” and these have been included in subsequent town-wide GIS maps.</i></p>					
(7) Develop trail from Broads Avenue to Sherman Nature Reserve	ConCom	OSAC		2012-14	N/A
(8) Continue to develop additional trails	OSAC	ConCom; Planning Bd; Trails Comm	Review of maps (macro & micro) Public input	2012-18	Conservation Fund, fundraising, grants
<p><i>Conservation Commission in 2015 purchased a strip of land on Oak Street to provide access to Pine Hill area.</i></p> <p><i>OSAC has explored trail from Community-Senior Center along wetlands to Union Street, to be planned at part of Community-Senior Center Open Space design, funded by Fall 2016 Town Meeting, with possible help from a Senior-Friendly Trails grant that the town received during 2017.</i></p> <p><i>OSAC has explored trail between Highland and Bacon streets on land given to Conservation Commission as part of Walnut Hill Estates development</i></p>					

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
4-B Develop and mark new and existing trails					
<p><i>The biggest trails efforts have been annual Natick Trails Day, which have taken place each fall since 2010, as well as spring beginning in 2019, attracting as many as 50 people each. The following is a complete list of Trails Days, including those that took place before the 2012 OSRP:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Oct. 23, 2010 – Clearing and cleanup of Eisenmenger Trail</i> <i>2. Oct. 22, 2011 – Erosion controls and other improvements to Hunnewell Town Forest</i> <i>3. Oct. 20, 2012 – Improvements to Morses Pond trails</i> <i>4. Oct. 19, 2013 – Kiosk installation and continued improvements to Hunnewell Town Forest</i> <i>5. Oct. 18, 2014 – Cleanup of Timothy Coolidge Hill, and installation of kiosks at three locations</i> <i>6. Oct. 17, 2015 – Grade improvement and clearing of Henry Wilson Trail</i> <i>7. Oct. 22, 2016 – Development of main segment of Cochituate Aqueduct Trail</i> <i>8. Oct. 21, 2017 – Grade improvement and other improvements to Cochituate Aqueduct Trail</i> <i>9. Oct. 20, 2018 – Clearing invasive plants and smoothing paths with wood chips at Pegan Cove</i> <i>9a. May 4, 2019 – (Spring Trails Day) – Clearing invasive plants and dealing with wet areas at Pegan Cove.</i> <i>10. Oct. 19, 2019 – Improving Erie Street trailhead and other improvements to Cochituate Aqueduct</i> <p><i>Additional trail maintenance has been carried on regularly by The Trails Maintenance Committee working with Keep Natick Beautiful (formerly known as Big Heart, Little Feet). Particularly impressive have been several major cleanups per year of the problematic Coolidge Hill in downtown Natick.</i></p>					
(1) Develop trail construction standards, including marking, bridges, walkways and surfaces	Trails Comm	ConCom	TBD (professional); adopt existing e.g. AMC?	2012	N/A
(2) Design, build and mark trails in conformance with these standards	Trails Comm	ConCom	TBD (professional & volunteer)	2012-18	Conservation Fund, fundraising
(3) Upgrade and mark existing trails to these standards with a priority of marking the Eisenmenger Trail and the Hunnewell Town Forest	Trails Comm	ConCom	TBD (professional & volunteer)	2012-18	Conservation Fund, fundraising

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
<i>The Town Forest Committee has improved trails within that park, much of the work completed during two different Natick Trails Days. The Town Forest Committee has also marked trails with a system of colored arrows, corresponding to colors on its new trails map. The Open Space Advisory Committee adopted a similar system in which blue arrows represent primary trails and red arrows alternative routes, and has marked the Eisenmenger Trail, Timothy Coolidge Hill, and the Cochituate Aqueduct Trail.</i>					
(4) Provide offsite directional and locational signs to trailheads	Trails Comm	ConCom	Identify existing standards	2012-14	Fundraising, Cons Fund
(5) Place kiosks or signs, including contact information, at trailheads with amenities, e.g. map dispensers	Trails Comm	ConCom	TBD (volunteer)	2012-18	Conservation Fund, fundraising
<i>Since 2011, new kiosks have been installed at Hunnewell Town Forest (Oak St.), Timothy Coolidge Hill, Middlesex Path (Middlesex Ave.), and Eisenmenger Trail (Memorial School). Rain hoods have been added to existing kiosks at Coolidge Field, Coolidge Hill, Hunnewell Town Forest (Bacon St.), Middlesex Path (West Central St.), and Mumford Wildlife Forest.</i>					
(6) Provide pet waste bag dispensers	Trails Comm	ConCom	TBD (volunteer)	2012-18	Conservation Fund, fundraising
<i>Keep Natick Beautiful has installed pet waste dispensers and trash dispensers at many trailheads and other sites in town.</i>					
Goal 5: Seek opportunities for reclaiming previously developed sites for recreational opportunities					
5-A Strategically acquire developed parcels for conversion or restoration to open space or recreation use, based upon priorities of Objective 1-F					
(1) Continue dialog regarding National Guard site	Town Admin	Many	Negotiation	2012-14	N/A
(2) Monitor other potential state and federal surplus sites	CDO	Many	Negotiation	Ongoing	N/A
(3) Monitor potential commercial and industrial properties	ConCom	Planning Bd ZBA	Negotiation	Ongoing	N/A
<i>The Town negotiated for the purchase of 22 Pleasant St., an industrial site, to convert to recreational land, but this didn't happen (see item 1.A(1)).</i>					
(4) Review tax delinquent properties	OSAC; BOS	Treasurer/Collect or	Prioritize annually when list is generated	Ongoing	N/A

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
5-B Convert properties to appropriate open space or recreation uses					
(1) Determine needs in collaboration with neighbors, abutters, and town boards	OSAC	Rec & Parks; ConCom	Public input thru outreach/events	Ongoing	N/A
(2) Develop sites accordingly	ConCom	Rec & Parks		Ongoing	Fundraising Cons Funds
Goal 6: Increase awareness, appreciation, and use of the town's open spaces, trails, natural resources, and recreational opportunities					
6-A Use print and electronic resources to publicize the location, amenities, and availability of town open spaces					
(1) Develop town-wide open space and trail maps and provide them on-line and in print.	OSAC	Trails Comm; Town Forest Comm; ConCom; DPW	Regular review	2012-18	Fundraising, Conservation Fund
<p><i>The Town Forest Committee developed an updated map of the Town Forest in 2014.</i></p> <p><i>OSAC, working with the Trails Maintenance Committee and the Community Development Office, developed maps of seven other parts of Town, mapping a total of 16 trail areas. These maps were put online in August 2016, linking to Town web pages for all trails-related committees, at http://natickma.gov/448/Trail-Maps, and were showcased at Natick Days in September 2016.</i></p> <p><i>OSAC is working with Natick GIS to incorporate all trails updates into an attractive trail map of the whole town.</i></p>					
(2) Develop a web site as part of the Town web site, public displays and presentations, and other means to provide public information	OSAC; IT	Trails Comm; Town Forest Comm; DPW		2012	Fundraising, Conservation Fund
<p><i>The Town Forest Committee created a web site to showcase Hunnewell Town Forest, http://naticktownforest.org/ All Town committees also have pages on the Town's official web site, although these are difficult to update and contain little information. See also Facebook presence in item (5).</i></p>					
(3) Sponsor trails walks and canoe or bicycle trips to introduce people to the available opportunities	OSAC	Trails Comm; Town Forest Comm; ConCom		2012-18	N/A
<p><i>The Open Space Advisory Committee held a walk on the Eisenmenger Trail on May 20, 2019, commemorating the anniversary of Bob Eisenmenger's passing and also marking ten years after a similar walk that took place on the trail's dedication. Beginning in the fall of 2019, Friends of Natick Trails started a monthly series of guided walks on various trails throughout town, including the Eisenmenger Trail, Pegan Cove, and the Cochituate Aqueduct.</i></p>					

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(4) Place large trail maps at strategic locations in town	OSAC	Economic Devt Comm		2013-15	Fundraising, Cons Fund
<i>Currently the only map is on the stairs in Town Hall, as OSAC works to update the Town-wide map (item 6.A(1))</i>					
(5) Promote through traditional and social media outlets	OSAC	Economic Devt Comm		2012-18	N/A
<i>OSAC has an e-mail list with 200 subscribers, and an active Facebook Group entitled Natick Open Space, with 500 members, providing a forum to share formal and informal information about open space. Other groups with Facebook Pages include: Cochituate Rail Trail, FIDO of Natick, Friends of Natick Trails, Keep Natick Beautiful, and Natick Community Organic Farm.</i>					
(6) Include information on open space, recreational and historic sites in Natick's economic development and tourism promotions	Economic Devt Comm	OSAC		2012-18	NA
6-B Develop and maintain signs to mark all publicly accessible open spaces					
<i>This goal is discussed in the Trails section under Goal 4-B</i>					
(1) Determine who is responsible for signs	ConCom	Trails Comm; DPW	Assignment	2012	N/A
(2) Determine a consistent graphic standard for signs	ConCom	Economic Devt Comm	Identify existing standards	2012-13	N/A
(3) Acquire funding for acquisition and installation of signs	ConCom	Economic Devt Comm		2012-14	Fundraising
(4) Purchase and install signs, including contact information	DPW	ConCom	Request	2012-13	N/A
(5) Provide historic and natural history information at trail heads or other appropriate locations					
6-C Promote universal access for trails, recreation facilities, and conservation areas and provide information for persons with disabilities					
(1) Determine accessibility levels for each trail and facility	Disability Officer	Trails Comm	Use state as standards	2012	
(2) Continue to work with the Commission On Disability for design of new facilities and improved accessibility of existing facilities	Disability Officer	Trails Comm		2012-18	Grants
(3) Indicate accessibility levels in brochures, maps, and other public materials	OSAC	Disability Officer, Trails Comm	Include in print material development	2013-18	Included in print materials

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(4) Particularly look at places with higher population of seniors and persons with disabilities	OSAC	Rec. & Parks		2013-18	
6-D Foster appreciation of open space and recreation resources to encourage a broader commitment to the community as a whole					
(1) Provide programs in schools	OSAC	School Dept	Plan/schedule activities	2012-18	N/A
(2) Participate in Natick Days and other town events	OSAC		Plan/schedule activities	2012-18	N/A
<p><i>OSAC has hosted tables at Natick Days every year since our creation in 2001. From 2011 through 2015, we coordinated a series of tables that has also included other town committees related to open space, which have at various times included the following (the exact list changing as new groups form and old ones disband): Cochituate Rail Trail Advisory Committee, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Town Forest Committee, Trails Maintenance Committee, Cochituate Aqueduct Study Committee, Safe Steps Grant Program, FIDO of Natick, and The Trustees of Reservations (manager of Pegan Hill).</i></p> <p><i>We have coordinated similar groups of tables at Natick Earth Day each year since it began in April 2012. We have also had presentations at various other events such as Health, Fun & Fitness Day, the Community Farm's Pancake Breakfast, Oldtown Photo Show.</i></p>					
(3) Provide guided walks and programs to foster open space appreciation	OSAC	Trails, Bike, Rail Trail, Aqueduct committees	Plan/schedule activities	2012-18	N/A
<i>See item 6-A(3)</i>					
(4) Use trails to promote connectivity between communities	OSAC	OSAC	Work with neighborhood groups	2012-18	fundraising
<i>See item 4-A(6) for walking paths that connect neighborhoods. See item 4-A(4) for Cochituate Aqueduct bridge connecting between Wethersfield and East Natick.</i>					
Goal 7: Develop and implement a management plan for open space					
7-A Identify responsibilities and resources for all types of open space and recreation parcels					
(1) Catalog all documents relating to open space (such as Town meeting actions, Town purchases, conservation restrictions, grants of easements, conditions included in Town board decisions, etc.) and ensure that the Town Assessor and relevant Town boards have this information	CDO		Hire consultant?	2013	Town Meeting appropriation

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
<i>Beginning in 2019, the Open Space Advisory Committee has worked with town officials to ensure that land purchased by, or transferred to, the Conservation Commission, is properly recorded in deeds and in the Assessor's records. This effort has been made part of the process of developing the Open Space Inventory for the current update of the Open Space & Recreation Plan.</i>					
(2) Develop plans for conservation land, trails (both Town-owned and easements), playing fields, parks, and other	OSAC	"Owners" of each parcel		2012	N/A
(3) For each one of these, list tasks, who makes decisions, who does work, and where money and other resources are going to come from	"Owners" of each parcel			2012	N/A
(4) Determine annual budget requirements and sources	"Owners" of each parcel	ConCom; BOS		2012	N/A
(5) Annually review implementation of management plan	OSAC	ConCom; Rec & Parks CDO; BOS	Intentionally scheduled	Annual	N/A
7-B Engage residents, businesses, and other groups as active stewards or sponsors					
(1) Develop standards for trail stewardship	Trails Comm	ConCom; OSAC	Addendum to Mgt Plan	Ongoing	N/A
(2) Define opportunities for trail and open space sponsorship	Trails Comm	ConCom; OSAC	Natick Pegasus, etc.	Ongoing	N/A
(3) Find stewards and sponsors	Trails Comm	ConCom; OSAC	Active outreach	Ongoing	N/A
(4) Engage volunteer groups in trail work	Trails Comm	Various	Active outreach	Ongoing	N/A
(5) Provide recognition to stewards, sponsors, and volunteers	Selectmen	Trails Comm; ConCom		Annual dinner?	Fundraising
7-C Promote coordination among the various town boards, commissions, and departments responsible for open spaces, including the Board of Selectmen, Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, School Committee, and the Open Space Advisory Committee; and counterparts in neighboring communities					
(1) Track progress on these Action Plan items, and report quarterly to relevant Town boards and committees	OSAC	BOS; Town Administrator		Quarterly	N/A

Recommendation	Lead Agency	Other Agencies	Implementation Mechanisms	Schedule	Possible Funding
(2) Encourage communications among boards, committees and communities	OSAC	BOS; Town Administrator		Review other's reports in semi-real time	N/A
<i>In an effort to streamline communications, establish a stewardship committee, and re-energize related groups, the Conservation Commission in April 2020 voted to dissolve the Trails Maintenance Committee and the Town Forest Committee and establish a new Trails and Forest Stewardship Committee.</i>					

BOS = Board of Selectmen
 CDO = Community Development Office
 ConCom = Conservation Commission
 DPW = Department of Public Works

MWRA = Mass. Water Resources Authority
 OSAC = Open Space Advisory Committee
 Rec = Recreation
 ZBA = Zoning Board of Appeals

Appendix B

Community Outreach

Pending

Appendix C

ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan

Pending