

## SECTION NINE: FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan presented in the following tables represents both short- and long-term strategies for achieving the stated goals (see Section 6) over the period 2007 to 2011. Many of the action items are assigned to the “Plan Sponsors” a group that includes the Board of Selectmen, the Park & Recreation Commission, the Conservation Commission, and the Planning Board. For such action items, the plan sponsors will be asked to designate a representative from their Board to undertake the steps necessary to bring the goal to fruition. In order to centralize the process, actions assigned to “Plan Sponsors” will be coordinated through the office of the Town Manager. Other items have been assigned to the Steering Committee/Plan Sponsors, a group comprised of the Town Manager, Park & Recreation Director, Planning Director, Parks & Forestry Superintendent and Conservation Officer who have been involved in plan update process since its inception. A legend defining each of the boards or committees listed below as well as their membership as of the publication date of this plan can be found in Appendix B.

See Action Plan Map at the end of this section for a summary of the following.

### GOAL I: ACQUIRE / PROTECT ADDITIONAL OPEN SPACE

<b>Objective I-A. Acquire/Protect Open Space with Multiple Conservation Values</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Seek funding for intern or retain senior volunteer corps member to research and prioritize parcels with multiple conservation values, identified in section 5, for review by the Plan Sponsors.	Department appropriation, Senior Corps funding	Conservation	2008
Work with property owners to protect priority parcels with multiple conservation values through conservation restrictions, easements, purchase, and other possible options.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Ask relevant Town Boards to discuss potential policy statement discouraging the conversion of Town-owned land that has conservation or recreation values.		Plan Sponsors	2008
Seek a permanent conservation restriction on property adjacent to Town Forest owned by the Boston Council of the Boy Scouts of America.	CPA, Conservation Fund	Conservation	2008
Identify and certify vernal pools throughout Town.		Conservation	Ongoing

Develop and maintain tracking system to follow status of Chapter 61 and 61A lands and other priority parcels.		Assessors	2008
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<b>Objective I-B. Acquire/Protect Open Space in the More Developed Areas of Town</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Identify parcels with potential to serve as neighborhood parks, tot-lots, or green spaces in Needham's more developed areas.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Identify parcels adjacent to centrally located open space, such as McCracken Camp Property, Sweet Wildlife Reserve, for potential acquisition/protection.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008
Work with private sector to encourage inclusion of parks, picnic areas, walking opportunities as part of proposed development/redevelopment in heavily populated areas of Town.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Accept May property at 1336 Great Plain Avenue.		Conservation, Selectmen	2008
Accept Schneider property to rear of 159 Marked Tree Road.		Conservation, Selectmen	2008

<b>Objective I-C. Explore All Approaches to Protecting Open Space</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Develop and submit to Town Meeting new zoning regulations that will encourage the protection of natural areas and expansion of or connections to existing open spaces where appropriate.		Planning Board	2008
Develop and submit to Town Meeting new zoning regulations that will require a conservation restriction on wetlands and other areas, including portions of		Planning Board	2008

buffer zone, as part of subdivision plans.			
Review the costs and benefits of offering additional tax incentives for conservation restrictions and/or easements.		Town Manager	2009
Explore opportunities to promote the formation of a local land trust to help protect open space.		Steering Committee	2008
Explore the possibility of permanent conservation restrictions or transfer of development rights to protect land in agricultural use.		Conservation	2008
Explore possibility of reinstating annual appropriation to Conservation Fund.	CPA	Conservation, Selectmen	2008
Establish protocol for evaluating/accepting land donations.		Steering Committee	2007

<b>Objective I-D. Preserve Unique Features</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Work with City of Newton, MWRA, state agencies and private organizations to rehabilitate Echo Bridge at Hemlock Gorge.	CPA	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Pursue a Conservation Restriction on Devil’s Den, located on private property on Gatewood Drive.	CPA, Conservation Fund	Conservation	2008
Establish clear access and develop a maintenance plan for <i>High Rock</i> in the Town Forest.		Park & Recreation	2009

**GOAL II: PRESERVE, ENHANCE & EXPAND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

<b>Objective II-A. Preserve and Improve Existing Athletic Fields &amp; Facilities</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Implement Field Study recommendations including the installation of synthetic turf at	Private funding, capital improvement	Park & Recreation, Selectmen &	2007

Memorial and DeFazio Parks.	plan appropriation	Memorial Park Trustees	
Review potential use of herbicides and pesticides on limited number of fields to address hazardous conditions created by weeds and grubs.		IPM Committee	2007
Develop a practical strategic plan for improving maintenance of Rosemary Pool/Lake and related facilities.	Existing capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation	2008
Collaborate with community sports associations to leverage funds for athletic field improvements.	Private funding	Park & Recreation	Ongoing
Continue lease of the current golf course land to a local non-profit entity for use as a golf course under terms favorable to the Town and its residents.	Private funding	Selectmen	2008
Replace bleachers at Memorial Park.	Capital improvement plan appropriation	DPW, Memorial Park Trustees	2008
Replace bleachers at DeFazio Park.	Capital improvement plan appropriation	DPW, Park & Recreation	2008
Rebuild Tennis Courts at High School and Mills Field.	Capital improvement plan appropriation, grant (ex. Land & Water Conservation Fund)	Park & Recreation	2008
Restore athletic fields at High School.	Existing capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation	2008

<b>Objective II-A. Preserve and Improve Existing Athletic Fields &amp; Facilities (continued)</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Replace playground equipment at	Donations,	Park &	2009

Greene's Field.	department appropriation	Recreation	
Explore the construction of an outdoor basketball court at DeFazio Park.	Department appropriation	Park & Recreation	2009
Replace playground equipment at Claxton Field.	Donations, department appropriation	Park & Recreation	2009
Replace playground equipment at Mills Field.	Donations, department appropriation	Park & Recreation	2009
Implement stormwater & drainage improvement at DeFazio Park.	Department appropriation	DPW	2010
Explore the development of an irrigation plan for the Golf Course and DeFazio Complex using water from the Reservoir on Dedham Avenue.		DPW	2010

<b>Objective II-B. Expand “Active” Recreational Resources to Meet Residents’ Needs</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Develop a plan and identify funding opportunities for future active and/or passive recreational use of the Nike Site.		School Committee, Park & Recreation, Selectmen	2008
Explore potential for “active” recreational uses of Ridge Hill that are consistent with the conservation purposes of the property.		Selectmen, Conservation	2008
Construct a Senior Center in a location that allows for use and enjoyment of natural resources, such as the Morse-Bradley Estate at Ridge Hill.	Capital improvement plan appropriation, donations	Selectmen, Council on Aging, Conservation	2008
Determine future recreational area needs and acquire land to fulfill these needs.	Donations, department appropriation	Park & Recreation, Selectmen	Ongoing
Develop inventory of undeveloped or partially developed private lands adjacent to existing recreation sites and		Park & Recreation	2008

explore possibility to expand recreation areas.			
Identify potential private funding for rehabilitation of fitness trail at Ridge Hill and subsequently undertake replacement.	Donations	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009

**Objective II-B. Expand “Active” Recreational Resources to Meet Residents’ Needs (continued)**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year</b> (calendar)
Explore interest in and feasibility of constructing a Skateboard Park.	Donations	Park & Recreation	2008

**Objective II-C. Improve Handicap Accessibility**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year</b> (calendar)
Pursue funding for handicapped accessible water bubblers at the larger athletic field complexes.	CPA	Park & Recreation	2007
Install handicapped accessible playground structures at Greene’s Field.	Donations, Disabilities Commission grant	Park & Recreation	2009
Install handicapped accessible playground structures at Claxton Field.	Donations, Disabilities Commission grant	Park & Recreation	2009
Install handicapped accessible playground structures at Mills Field.	Donations, Disabilities Commission grant	Park & Recreation	2009
Install handicapped accessible bleachers at Memorial Park.	Capital improvement plan appropriation	DPW, Memorial Park Trustees	2008
Improve handicapped access to fields and facilities at DeFazio Park.	Donations, Capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation, DPW	Ongoing

Improve handicapped access to fields and facilities at Memorial Park.	Donations, Capital improvement plan appropriation	Park & Recreation, DPW, Memorial Park Trustees	Ongoing
Identify appropriate areas to install handicapped accessible trails and pursue funding for construction.	Department appropriation, seek grants	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008

**GOAL III: EXPAND ACCESS, PROMOTE AWARENESS AND SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF NEEDHAM'S NATURAL RESOURCES.**

<b>Objective III-A. Expand Access To and Along the Charles River</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Identify and evaluate potential walking routes along Charles River.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009
Work with private property owners to expand trail network along Charles River through pedestrian easements, and other options.	CPA, Conservation Fund	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Identify additional public access points along the Charles River for activities such as fishing, canoeing and kayaking.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009
Work with State Department of Conservation and Recreation and The Trustees of Reservations to identify opportunities to provide increased pedestrian access and boating opportunities on the Charles River.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	Ongoing
Work with State Department of Conservation and Recreation and The Trustees of Reservations to develop/offer canoeing programs.		Park & Recreation	2009
Work with project proponent for the Charles River Landing Complex to develop and implement walking trail along Charles River.	Donation	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Provide more information about existing access to Charles River through brochures, web-site, and other	Department appropriation	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008

opportunities.			
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<b>Objective III-B. Provide Linkages</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Develop a plan for the “Rosemary Loop Trail” to connect downtown with Rosemary Lake and the Library through Town-owned land and existing easements.	Department appropriation	Plan Sponsors	2008
Develop inventory of easements that allow access over private property.	CPA	Selectmen, Steering Committee	2008
Establish connections between existing conservation land and other open space areas to form loops or greenbelts, some with paths, throughout Town.	Department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	2008
Work with Algonquin Gas Transmission to design and construct pathway across Army Corps natural valley storage area, from Ridge Hill to Mary Chilton Road.	Donation	Conservation, Selectmen	2008

<b>Objective III-B. Provide Linkages (continued)</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Develop a Town-wide pathway system that will link neighborhoods to open spaces, recreation facilities, schools, and shopping centers.	Department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	2010
Cooperate with agencies/organizations in the development of regional bike trails through Needham and pursue federal funding for same.		Selectmen	Ongoing
Work with Babson College and Olin College to formalize access to walking trails through campuses.		Conservation	2008
Work with Sportsmen’s Pond Association to create connection between Great Plain Avenue and High Rock Street, through May/Schneider properties and Rosemary Glen.	Donation	Conservation	2008



<b>Objective III- C. Improve and Expand “Passive” Recreational Opportunities</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Hire consultant to develop Comprehensive Master Trails Plan, through CPA funds already awarded.	CPA	Conservation	2007
Establish Trails Master Plan Committee.		Selectmen	2007
Implement recommendations from Comprehensive Master Trails Plan.	CPA, department appropriations, seek grants	Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008
Repair Bridges/Boardwalks along Swamp Trail at Ridge Hill.	CPA	Conservation	2007
Review current access to Farley Pond Conservation Area and propose alternatives if appropriate.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2008
Explore possibility of modifying water levels at Farley Pond to improve skating conditions.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2009
Work with the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and associated organizations such as the <i>Charles River Cutler Park to Commonwealth Avenue Protection Group</i> to identify and provide improved access to Cutler Lake.		Conservation, Park & Recreation	2007
Establish a gift fund and solicit donations for maintenance of trails.		Plan Sponsors	2008
Collaborate with private sector to institute “clean-up” days at different areas throughout Town.	Donations, department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing

<b>Objective III- C. Improve and Expand “Passive” Recreational Opportunities (continued)</b>			
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Establish a “Land Steward” volunteer program.		Conservation	2008

Continue to work with Scouting Groups to undertake trail and other improvements to Town-owned land.	Donations, department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Construct trail and sign system through Ridge Hill / Wiswall /Stare properties, in accordance with recommendations from Trails Plan.	CPA	Conservation	2010
Evaluate alternative methods for managing invasive species and improving water quality at Walker Pond.		Park & Recreation	Ongoing

**Objective III- D. Educate and Inform the Public About Existing Open Space and Natural Resources**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Develop consistent signage to identify Natural Resources.	Department appropriations	Plan Sponsors	2008
Work with local civic associations and government agencies to fund the purchase and installation of signs.	Donations	Plan Sponsors	2008
Design and install signs/kiosks at multiple trail heads, including Ridge Hill, Town Forest.	CPA	Plan Sponsors	2008
Provide additional information about Needham's Natural Resources on the Town website.		Conservation	2009
Design and distribute, through various resources, brochures and trail maps for Ridge Hill and Town Forest.	Department appropriations	Park & Recreation, Conservation	2009
Organize guided trail walks.		Conservation	2008
Collaborate with Science Center to increase public knowledge about trails behind Newman School.		Conservation, School Department	2008

**Objective III- E. Understand and Appropriately Manage Large Tracts of Open Space**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Develop ecological inventory and management plans for each of the		Conservation	2010

Town's major natural areas to assure good stewardship of resources.			
Maintain Tree City USA designation.	Department appropriation	DPW	Ongoing

**Objective III- E. Understand and Appropriately Manage Large Tracts of Open Space (continued)**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Encourage ecologically sound management of open space by the private sector.		Plan Sponsors	Ongoing
Complete Forest / Watershed Management Plan.	Department appropriation	DPW	2007
Implement recommendations from Forest / Watershed Management Plan.	Department appropriation, seek grants	DPW	2008
Update GIS system with information on trails and wildlife habitat.		Conservation, Technology	2010

**GOAL IV: PROTECT WATER RESOURCES.**

**Objective IV-A. Minimize Contamination of Ground and Surface Waters**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Year (calendar)</b>
Continue to implement Stormwater Best Management Practices.	Department appropriation, seek grants	DPW	Ongoing
Strategically identify parts of road network as low- or no-salt areas, and minimize, to the extent practical, the salting of roads.		DPW	2008
Continue to work with the MA Highway Department to complete steps necessary to revert control of Chestnut Street to Town, leading towards policy of reduced salting of road.	State funding	Selectmen, DPW	Ongoing
Work with Charles River Watershed Association to identify and remedy "hot spots" and sources of contamination.	Department appropriation	Board of Health	Ongoing

Continue monitoring stormwater outfalls in accordance with NPDES Phase II requirements.	Department appropriation	DPW	Ongoing
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**Objective IV-B. Discourage Excessive Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides**

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Continue Integrated Pest Management Program on publicly-owned lands.		IPM Committee	Ongoing
Work with large landholders to encourage conservative use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizer.		Board of Health	Ongoing
Educate public about impacts of and alternatives to conventional fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides.		Board of Health	2009

**Objective IV-C. Encourage Water Conservation**

Action Item	Funding	Responsible Party	Year (calendar)
Educate residents and the private sector about measures to advance water conservation.		Selectmen	2008