

VIII. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

A. INTRODUCTION

Cumberland is a community that greatly values its recreational and open space resources. The Town has devoted a significant amount of resources and energy to protect and manage these areas, and acknowledges that much more must still be done. Cumberland's remaining farms and fields are as integral to its character as are its historic mill villages. The diverse landscape, i.e., densely populated neighborhoods as well as wide expanses of forests and fields, makes it difficult to articulate a single goal. Often, the need for soccer fields competes with funds available for wildlife habitat protection. Sometimes, the situation becomes complicated when a single parcel of land can lend itself to both uses. In these instances, it becomes vital that an organizational framework exists in order to provide structure to the conversations that must take place. This element is the initial attempt to document Cumberland's resources and needs, and offers guidance as to how communications between different stakeholders can be improved to promote thoughtful decision-making.

State Planning Act Requirements

According to the R.I. Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, the Open Space and Recreational Element shall "include an inventory of recreational resources, open space areas and recorded access to such resources and areas. The element shall also contain an analysis of forecasted needs and policies for the management and protection of such resources and areas. The policies and implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the implementation program element."

The Act also requires Consistency with State Guide Plan elements;

- 110 Goals and Policies
- 121 State Land Use Policies and Plan
- 152 State's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
- 155 Greenspace & Greenways
- 161 Forest Resources Management Plan

Recreation

The Recreation section inventories recreation facilities located in Cumberland, describes changes since the 1991 Plan, and assesses future recreational needs. Recreational facilities fall into two general categories: places for active play, and areas for the passive enjoyment of nature. These two categories are not mutually exclusive: some facilities may provide opportunities for both types of recreation. The following describes each type of recreation, as well as the types of facilities where such recreation generally occurs.

Active Recreation - Generally considered to be recreation that requires specific facilities or is of a structured nature. Several types of recreational facilities primarily serve as places for active recreation, these include:

- **Playlots** – Neighborhood play areas intended for children of pre-school age. They are essentially a substitute for home backyard areas and are normally provided in areas with high population density.
- **Playgrounds** – Neighborhood play areas for the recreational needs of the 5 to 12 year age group. They may include apparatus areas, field areas for games and informal play activities; passive areas; and areas for court games.
- **Playfields** – Areas which usually serve more than one neighborhood and provide varied forms of activities for young people and adults. They include facilities for a wide variety of recreational opportunities.
- **Special Areas** – Areas developed for a special use such as a municipal beach, golf course, etc.

Passive Recreation - Unlike active recreation, passive recreation requires a minimum of facilities or equipment; it generally occurs in a natural setting and does not consume resources. Such activities as walking, hiking, and bird-watching are considered passive recreation. Recreational facilities for passive enjoyment of the outdoors include:

- **Neighborhood Park** – Areas primarily for sitting and quiet relaxation; may be in conjunction with a playground or playfield.

- **Major Parks or Reservations** – Large parks which provide for a variety of recreational opportunities, with large areas left in their natural state.
- **Linear Park** – Areas used for recreational travel, usually build on natural corridors such as utility easements, rights of way, or river valleys, and function to link other recreational facilities.

Open Space/Conservation

Open Space and Conservation areas provide a variety of benefits to Cumberland's residents. While they may provide opportunities for passive recreational use, this is not their primary function; in fact, some are unsuitable for direct human use. Rather, they provide indirect benefits such as protection of both surface and groundwater resources, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic value. According to the State Guide Plan Element *A Greener Path*, undeveloped conservation or "Greenspace Areas" are "essential to life in Rhode Island today and in the future...These are areas necessary to protect the unique natural resources of the community". The Open Space Section inventories both public and private open space in Cumberland, details parcels of land that have been protected since the original Comprehensive Plan, and sets forth Cumberland's Open Space acquisition priorities for the future.

Planning Districts

To analyze the availability of existing open space and recreational facilities, the Town has been divided into Planning Districts. Planning Districts are used throughout the Comprehensive Plan as a common element that bonds planning effects to distinctive areas of the Town. The districts correspond to the delineation of census tracts established for the Town by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The six Planning Districts in Cumberland are described below.

- **District 1: Valley Falls, Lonsdale** - Located in the southern section of Cumberland and bordered by the City of Central Falls, this district is noted historically for its early development as a series of mill villages around which single and multi-family residential development took place. At 7.3 people per acre, this district is the most densely settled within the Town.

- **District 2: Ashton, Berkeley** - Originally mill villages that developed alongside the Blackstone River, this district is characterized by mixed land use with medium to high-density residential development.
- **District 3: Monastery** - Characterized by suburban growth which occurred during the 1960's, including new subdivisions developed along Mendon and Diamond Hill Roads.
- **District 4: Arnold Mills, Lippitt Estates** - This area is characterized by single-family residential development, the historic village of Arnold Mills, and large reservoirs. This area has experienced a great deal of growth over the past decade.
- **District 5: Grants Mills, Diamond Hill, Ballou** - This district consists of the largest land area of the six planning districts. It is characterized by low-density rural development.
- **District 6: Cumberland Hill** - A predominantly residential area with single-family homes and some recent condominium development. This district has the second highest population density in Cumberland.

B. INVENTORY

This section inventories facilities utilized for active and passive recreation as well as open space and conservation in the Town of Cumberland. The recreation section summarizes Town-owned recreational facilities as well as privately owned facilities. The Open Space section details space preserved primarily for non-recreational purposes that is available for public use, and identifies other conservation areas. Both the Recreation and Open Space sections include a summary of changes that have taken place since the Comprehensive Plan was originally written in 1991.

1. Recreation

The Town's recreational facilities are listed below and are illustrated in Figure VIII-1.

INDOOR

1. Ashton School (cafeteria/all purpose room)
2. B.F. Norton School (gymnasium, cafeteria)
3. Community School
4. Cumberland High School (gymnasium, auditorium)
5. Cumberland Hill School (auditorium)
6. Cumberland Middle School (gymnasium)
7. Garvin School (all purpose room, cafeteria)
8. North Cumberland Middle School (gymnasium, cafeteria)
9. Transitional School (gymnasium, cafeteria)

PLAYGROUNDS:

1. Ashton School
2. Community School
3. Cumberland Hill School
4. Currier Play Area
5. Monastery

BASKETBALL COURTS:

1. Ashton School
2. Community School
3. Currier Play Area
4. Garvin School (2-1/2 courts)

TENNIS COURTS:

1. Tucker Field - 4

WALKING/JOGGING:

1. Monastery - 1.1 mile walking/jogging trail
2. Tucker Field Track - 1/4 mile track

SOCCER/FOOTBALL:

1. Cumberland High School (practice soccer)
2. Cumberland Hill (soccer)
3. Tucker Field (football/soccer)

INDOOR POOLS:

1. Boys & Girls Club of Cumberland and Lincoln
2. Cumberland High School

PARKS:

1. Diamond Hill Park
2. Monastery
3. Valley Falls Heritage Park
4. Moran Family Park
5. Blackstone Memorial Park

BALL FIELDS:

DIAMOND HILL PARK - 1 little league field (Diamond Hill Road), 1 softball field, and 2 soccer fields

BENTLEY/RAZEE - 1 little league field; 1 Babe Ruth field; 1 soft ball field

RAZEE FIELD - 1 little league field (on Nate Whipple Hwy. behind Masonic Lodge) headed towards Attleboro

CARVIN FIELD - 1 little league field (on Diamond Hill Road behind the Garvin School and Police Station)

HIGH STREET FIELD - 1 little league field (High Street next to Valley Falls Fire Station at the top of Blackstone Street)

B.F. NORTON - 1 little league field (Broad Street behind B.F. Norton School)

BERKELEY OVAL 1 Babe Ruth field (at bottom of Martin Street next to Animal Shelter)

TUCKER FIELD - 1 hardball field , 1 softball field, 1 soccer field, 1 football field (on Mendon Road across from C.H.S.)

FARM DRIVE - 1 little league field (also used for C.H.S. girls softball team), 1 baseball field - C.H.S. baseball/football practice field (both fields can be reached from the parking lot at C.H.S.)

ASHTON SCHOOL - 1 little league/instructional field (Scott Road next to Ashton School)

CUMBERLAND HILL SCHOOL - McLaughlin Field (205 Manville Hill Road), 1 little league field, 1 soccer field

Changes Since 1991

Since the Comprehensive Plan was originally written, four new playfields have been acquired by the Town: the Razee, Bentley/Razee, High Street, and Farm Drive Fields. The Town has also acquired the 75-acre Diamond Hill Park from the State of Rhode Island and the Drop Zone Community Center for use as a student center. Major renovations and upgrades have been undertaken at:

- **Currier Play Area** – skatepark.
- **Tucker Memorial Field** – Tennis Courts, lighting.
- **Valley Falls Heritage Park** - Passive recreation, signage, picnic area.

Future Recreational Needs

Future recreational needs of the Town of Cumberland were determined based on the recreational inventory, original Comprehensive Plan, and input from the Recreation Department and Board. Specific plans for improvements to recreational facilities as well as opportunities for additional active and passive recreation are identified below.

Drop Zone Community Center - This 2.40 acre parcel is located adjacent to the Town's Central Artery Greenway, and is across the street from Cumberland High School. It was recently acquired by the Town for use as a youth center. The building needs renovation, but ultimately could serve as "gateway facility" to the Town's expanding greenway system with the creation of trails and improvements to the excess land behind the existing building. The property could also be used for classrooms and meeting space for a variety of environmental, cultural, and educational organizations.

Active Recreation - As Cumberland's population increases, so does the need for active recreational opportunities. Currently, there is an insufficient amount of mini-parks and playgrounds in Cumberland. These facilities are especially important in the more densely developed parts of Town such as Valley Falls and Lonsdale/Berkeley.

While there is no single Community Park in Cumberland, some of the functions of a Community Park are provided by the Monastery, Tucker Memorial Field, and Diamond Hill Town Park; improvements to recreational opportunities at these locations should continue in order to benefit the entire community. While there are many isolated fields, a centrally located athletic complex is still needed. The various sports organizations in Town all cite needs for additional playing fields. Additionally, the Town is eager to continue working with the State and the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor to build the regional bikepath along the Blackstone River, beginning alongside the Pratt Dam. The River and its banks are a valuable resource that the Town should utilize for recreational purposes while at the same time protecting them as valuable natural resources.

Passive Recreation - Some of the Town's existing active recreation facilities would serve a broader percentage of the citizenry if passive recreation facilities were incorporated in the overall program. Opportunities for improvements to passive recreation exist at a variety of locations. Tucker Field, in particular, represents an area where passive

recreation such as walking trails and better spectator amenities would be well suited.

Other Plans - Recreation Director Craig Letourneau has identified several specific plans for improving Recreational opportunities in Cumberland. Improvements to trails at the Monastery and other Town-owned land will provide important opportunities for passive recreation. The (closed) Cumberland Landfill and an unnamed island on the Blackstone River are areas that could potentially be developed for recreational use. New active recreational opportunities can be provided by continued improvements at Currier Park and by construction of an additional skatepark in the northern section of Town, as well as by developing opportunities for winter sports at Diamond Hill Town Park. Finally, it would be appropriate to use some of the Town-owned land between Manville Hill Road, Plant Street and Branch Avenue to satisfy the recreational needs of the nearby, dense residential neighborhood.

2. Open Space

Existing Open Space

Currently, there are 48 properties (involving over 200 individual lots) comprising a land area of approximately 5,055 acres dedicated to open space, recreation and conservation purposes in the Town of Cumberland. Of that amount, 2,192 acres are Town-owned, 1,659 acres are owned by the Pawtucket Water Supply Board; and 423 are owned by the State of Rhode Island. The remaining acreage is owned by private environmental groups such as the Cumberland Land Trust, homeowners associations, and individuals. Beyond pursuing an aggressive acquisition program, the Town continues to use its Cluster Ordinance to preserve open space as part of its subdivision approval process. Additionally, as evidence of the Town's interest in preserving open space, the Town Council recently passed a Resolution that sets aside a fixed amount annually from the State's Conveyance fees towards open space acquisition. Another mechanism that is being contemplated is the use of impact fees to help the Town maintain or increase its current population to protected open space ratio. Below is a summary of these parcels as well as those parcels associated with the schools.

Cumberland Comprehensive Plan – Recreation and Open Space Element

Town Council adopted August 2003, State adopted June 2004

Table VIII- 1 Public Open Space

Summary

Cumberland	2191.86
Cumberland Schools	90.49
Cumberland Land Trust	213.22
RIDEM	423.27
PWSB	1659.04
Private	477.24
Total	5055.12

Cumberland Schools

Central Grammar	0.58
Community School	4.38
Cumberland High	26.50
Cumberland Middle	9.03
Garvin Memorial	15.26
N. Cumberland Middle	34.74
Total	90.49

Town of Cumberland Open Space

Anthony Lawrence Donation	60.00
Bailey-Zahner	20.83
Berkley Oval	4.96
Blackall	68.63
Blackstone River	53.60
Caetano	76.50
Caron Property	22.00
Cumberlandite	3.75
Cumberland Landfill	52.00
Currier Park	1.29
Diamond Hill	132.41
Fanning Wilderness	40.30
Epheta House	16.75
Franklin Farm	65.38
Gainsborough Commons	84.90
Georgianna Villa	2.02
Hines Farm	29.08
Hunter's Run	12.35
Lambert	58.33
Lippitt	41.32
Long Brook	126.20
Manville Dam	2.00
Memorial Park	3.87
Miller's Oak	95.00
Monastery	481.60
Moran Family Park	0.98
Schofield Farm	72.86
Scott Brook Conservation Area	81.19
Sneech Pond ¹	332.00
Tucker Field & Drop Zone	129.71
Valley Falls Heritage Park	2.97
William Blackstone Park	1.07
Other ²	16.00
Total	2191.86

Cumberland Land Trust

High Rock Farm Preserve	69.09
Bessette Property	15.21
Brush Hill	7.50
Mello Property	4.00
Nate Whipple Highway	2.59
Otis Smith Farm	52.30
Veronica A. Geddes Bowen	19.95
Other	42.58
Total	213.22

RIDEM

Blackstone River	44.30
Carl's Pond Fishing Area	11.12
Diamond Hill State Park	358.00
Fanning Wilderness	7.89
Other	1.96
Total	423.27

Pawtucket Water Supply Bd. 1659.04

Private

Audobon Society	30.92
Camp Ker Anna	28.54
Cumberland Beagle Club	93.94
Lippitt Estates Comm. Assoc.	37.84
Sister's of Mercy	286.00
Total	477.24

1: Does not include portion of Reservoir

2: Approximate acreage of small isolated parcels

All open space owned by the Town of Cumberland and the State of Rhode Island is generally available to the public for passive recreational uses. In addition, the nature preserves held by the private Cumberland Land Trust, Inc. are accessible to the public. Table VIII-2 lists Open Space areas available for public use; the location of each of these properties is illustrated in Figure VIII-1.

Management Plans are in the process of being prepared for each parcel such that the uses allowed and prohibited are unambiguous. These plans will delineate specific future uses and provide specific definitions of active versus passive recreation. Conservation easements or preservation rights that are articulated in the plans should be visible on the ground.

Open Space Acquired since 1991

Since the 1991 Comprehensive Plan, open space in Cumberland has increased by 5539 percent (from 3,625 acres to 5,055 acres). The 1991 Plan recommended the acquisition of 2,764 specific acres of land. Of this specifically targeted open space, 823.5 acres were acquired for permanent protection; other properties were developed as Cluster Subdivisions with Open Space set asides. Also, other properties were acquired that weren't targeted, but were valuable and otherwise became available. Some remaining acreage from the Town's targeted list is still available for open space acquisition. Table VIII-2 shows the status of open space properties recommended by the Town's 1991 Plan.

Table VIII-2 Status of 1991 Recommended Acquisitions

NAME	ACRES	1991 STATUS	2003 STATUS
Blackstone River Valley	280	To be acquired	3.5 Acres acquired (Town)
Elderly Housing Passive Recreation Area	----	To be acquired	No longer under consideration
Diamond Hill Town Park	75	Acquire from State	75 acres acquired (Town)
The Monastery	N/A	Develop Resource Management Plan	Not yet developed.
Geddes Farm	32	Acquire Dev't Rights	17.4 acre Cluster Open Space
Angell Farm		Acquire Dev't Rights	Remains a high priority
Hines Farm	130	Acquire Dev't Rights	28.6 acres Cluster Open Space
Long Brook	150	To be acquired	90.8 acres acquired (Town)
Abbott Run	100	To be acquired	Not yet acquired
Lippitt Estates	32	To be acquired	32 acres acquired (Town)
Scott Pond (was Scott Brook & Mill Pond)	160	To be acquired	98.5 acres acquired (Town)
Diamond Hill Vineyards	33	Acquire Dev't Rights	Remains a high priority
Phantom Farm	15	Acquire Dev't Rights	Remains a high priority
Franklin Farm	65.4	Acquire Dev't Rights	65.4 acres acquired (Town)
West Wrentham Road	300	Conservation easements	92 acres acquired (Town – Highland/Blackall)
Nate Whipple Wetland (was East Sneeck Brook)	335	To be acquired	40 acres acquired (Land Trust)
Rosetti Land	182	To be preserved	Preserved
Diamond Hill Park Expansion	400	To be acquired	262 acres acquired (State)
Miscoe Lake	550	To be preserved	51 acre Cluster Open Space 2 acres acquired (Town)

Open Space Priorities

Cumberland possesses valuable natural areas which provide an opportunity for open space preservation and acquisition. Areas which should be targeted for acquisition include agricultural lands, wetlands, land in drinking water supply watersheds, river and stream corridors, and areas of groundwater recharge. Focus areas for protection in Cumberland identified by the State are those containing lime-based 'greenstone' supporting rare species. These areas should be acquired for the protection of biodiversity in the State. Designated Rare Species Habitats have been identified in Cumberland by the Natural Heritage Program, these areas are detailed in Element V – Natural Resources of this Plan and should also be acquired.

While no specific method for determining priorities for open space acquisition has been developed as of yet, current priorities include expansion of The Cumberland Greenway, creation of a pedestrian trail system, and acquisition of land adjacent to existing protected properties. Ideally, the current population to open space acreage should be maintained as the Town's population continues to grow.

The Cumberland Greenway - Named by the Cumberland Land Trust, The Cumberland Greenway is a vision plan to create one contiguous area of open space from the Monastery to Diamond Hill State Park. The Central Artery of the Cumberland Greenway presently consists of Tucker Field, the Scott Brook Conservation Area, the Baskin Property, the Brown and Rowbottom Properties, Lippitt Estates, and the Long Brook Conservation Area. This community-wide greenway system connects forests, watersheds, riparian corridors, wildlife habitats, parks and recreation areas. Expanding this area through acquisition of nearby properties is a top priority for the Town.

Cumberland Greenway Pedestrian Trail System - Several hiking/pedestrian trails currently exist in Cumberland. However, their use is greatly limited by their lack of interconnection. Extending this system and creating linkages between open space parcels and important destinations is a priority for the Town. In addition to mapping the existing formal and informal trails (and primary and secondary corridors) on these and other open space properties, the Town needs to have the equipment and labor to properly maintain these trails, develop consistent design standards and a financing program for maintenance and extensions.

Specific opportunities for creating such a trail system exist at:

- Diamond Hill State Park Extension
- NCMS/Ash Swamp/Tower Hill Estates/Caetano Open Space/Staples Rd. area
- Lippitt Estates Conservation Area
- Scott Pond Conservation Area
- Longbrook Conservation Area
- Blackall Conservation Area

The Warner Trail – This 34-mile long trail, created prior to WWII, extends from Canton, MA to Diamond Hill State Park and connects public parcels including Town forests and private property. It enters Cumberland from Wrentham in the northeast corner of the State. Acquisition of parcels along the trail through fee simple and conservation easements and to extend the trail to the Blackstone Heritage Corridor as recommended in the *Trails and Greenways, A Vision for the Blackstone River Valley* (2003) is a priority.

Property Contiguous to Existing Open Space - Preserving open space adjacent to existing open space allows for the creation of large, contiguous tracts of land that are more valuable for protecting wildlife habitat than having smaller, non-contiguous tracts. Maintenance of the remaining contiguous forest canopy is equally important. In addition, expanding existing open space areas is an important step for creating a North and South Artery of The Cumberland Greenway. Parcels such as Angell Farm, Phantom Farm, Pratt property and the Emerson Property are of great importance for preservation as farmland and open space. Protecting our public drinking water supplies for the future through acquisition of lands adjacent to Town and Pawtucket Water Supply lands including reservoir tributaries is also a top priority.

C. FINDINGS

1. Recreation

Mini-Parks/Playgrounds – These active recreational facilities are geared toward serving small local areas. Cumberland has only five playgrounds and no mini-parks. This is generally not problematic in areas of large-lot single-family residential development, however, these facilities should be provided in areas of denser, multi-family development such as Valley Falls, Lonsdale, and Berkeley.

Major Park – Community Parks and Reservations in Cumberland include the Town-owned Diamond Hill Park, Tucker Memorial Field, and the Monastery, as well as the State-owned Diamond Hill Reserve. While individually these areas do not serve all the functions generally considered necessary for a major park, together they do meet the community's needs. The Town-owned properties should be focus areas for improvements, so that they can better benefit Cumberland's population.

As noted in the Demographic Element, Cumberland's population is aging. Recreational programs and facilities should be planned for this changing population. This should include incorporation of passive recreation opportunities at Tucker Field; as well as recognition of the Town's growing elderly citizenry in the Town's ongoing phased implementation of a renovation to Diamond Hill Town Park. The outdoor theatre in Diamond Hill Town Park is a great resource in the summer, but is in need of renovations.

Linear Park - The Blackstone Valley River National Heritage Corridor offers a unique open space, recreational, historic/architectural preservation and tourism opportunity to the Town of Cumberland, as well as the other 19 communities which make up the Corridor.

2. Open Space

Cumberland possesses valuable natural areas that provide a unique opportunity for open space preservation and acquisition. The 1991 community survey demonstrated the desire of the majority of respondents to maintain Cumberland's suburban/rural character. The community survey also revealed the willingness of the respondents to preserve Cumberland's material resources by purchasing land and using it for open space. The recent 1.5 million dollar voter-approved bond of open space acquisition serves as evidence of Cumberland's continued commitment to preserving and protecting open space.

According to the RI Department of Administration's Statewide Planning Program almost 34 percent of Cumberland was developed as of 1995, this percentage has increased, generally as residential subdivisions, since the last Land Use survey. Currently, approximately 26 percent of Cumberland's land area is under some kind of protection from development. This leaves approximately 40 percent of Cumberland with the potential of being developed, but also represents future opportunities for acquisition of open space. A priority system for acquisition of open space in the future will be invaluable for ensuring that limited resources are used in the most efficient and beneficial manner.

D. GOALS, POLICIES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the inventory and analysis of the previous sections, goals and policies for open space and recreation have been formulated. The State has formulated open space and recreation goals which local plans should consider. The following are State goals for this Element:

Rhode Island State Planning Act Goals

- To promote orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities.
- To promote the protection of the natural, historic and cultural resources of each municipality and the state.
- To promote the preservation of the open space and recreational resources of each municipality and the state.
- To encourage the use of innovative development regulations and techniques that promote the development of land suitable for development while protecting our natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources and achieving a balanced pattern of land uses.

Cumberland Recreation and Open Space Goals

Goal OS.1 MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES FOR THE TOWN.

Policy OS.1.1 Provide adequate resources for maintaining the Town's recreational facilities.

Policy OS.1.2 Develop a Recreational Capital Improvement Program for identifying and scheduling future recreational projects.

Action OS.1.2.1 Develop playgrounds in Planning Districts 2 and 3.

Action OS.1.2.2 Acquire additional parcels for the construction of needed recreational opportunities.

Policy OS.1.3 Continue to coordinate with the School Department to provide recreational programs and facilities; coordinate with private agencies for maintenance.

Action OS.1.3.1 Coordinate the construction of new school facilities to include multiple purpose recreational areas for both school and town use.

Policy OS.1.4 Develop public awareness of the recreational opportunities provided by the Town.

Action OS.1.4.1 Continue the Recreation Department's aggressive program promoting awareness of Cumberland's recreational opportunities.

Goal OS.2 PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL CUMBERLAND RESIDENTS.

Policy OS.2.1 Relate the type and size of recreational facilities in each area to a demonstrated need for facilities.

Policy OS.2.2 Develop and promote recreational programs for all age groups.

Goal OS.3 MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE CUMBERLAND'S OPEN SPACE BY PRESERVING UNIQUE NATURAL AREAS AND DEVELOPING A SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM OF FURTHER OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT OF BOTH EXISTING AND ADDITIONAL ACQUISITIONS.

Policy OS.3.1 Preserve Cumberland's unique natural areas through land acquisition, acquisition of conservation easement, and transfer of development rights.

Action OS.3.1.1 Establish specific annual Open Space acquisition targets to continue the highly successful program of open space acquisition.

Action OS.3.1.2 Maintain an inventory of Open Space holdings and natural resources, including special trees (their number, locations, types and conditions) and illustrate using GIS.

Action OS.3.1.3 Develop a priority list for future potential acquisitions based on specific selection criteria and/or an open space ranking system.

Action OS.3.1.4 Update the *Open Space, Recreation, Conservation and Tourism Guide Plan 1990-1996*.

Action OS.3.1.5 Coordinate efforts with the Cumberland Land Trust to identify and acquire tracts of land that will enlarge existing protected parcels in order to create a large area of contiguous open space from the Monastery to Diamond Hill State Park called the Cumberland Greenway.

Policy OS.3.2 Improve the regulatory framework by which Open Space areas are preserved in the Town of Cumberland.

Action OS.3.2.1 Amend the present Cluster Conservation Development Zoning Ordinance for greater clarity and to promote the optimum location for buildings away from scenic views, slopes, and wetlands; and to include the most meaningful contiguous high quality resource lands as the designated open space portion of subdivisions.

- Action OS.3.2.2** Modify the Town’s Subdivision Regulations to require a mandatory set aside for open space which consists of buildable land, rather than wetland or other areas with building constraints.
- Action OS.3.2.3** Adopt a Cumberland Greenspace Protection Strategy Overlay District in the zoning ordinance.
- Action OS.3.2.4** Amend the Subdivision Regulations to better evaluate and protect the natural features and cultural characteristics, including significant woodlands and special trees, as part of the review process for new subdivisions and land development projects; where natural resources are involved, consider using a Zoning Ordinance to reduce building envelopes.
- Action OS.3.2.5** Partner with the Conservation Commission, Cumberland Land Trust, Garden Clubs and utility companies to involve citizens and organizations in communicating and implementing natural resource (including trees and woodlands) protection efforts.
- Policy OS.3.3** Develop plans to fund open space purchases through revenues generated by impact fees.
- Action OS.3.3.1** Examine the use of impact fees and/or mandatory subdivision land dedication to either the Town, Land Trust or Homeowner’s associations to provide areas for Open Space.
- Action OS.3.3.2** Establish a regular bond initiative for the purchase of Open Space.
- Action OS.3.3.3** Establish a restricted Open Space account with annual

funding from the Town's share of the state's conveyance tax.

Policy OS.3.4 Support the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Program and Blackstone River Valley Watershed Council as a unifying theme and program for Open Space preservation.

Action OS.3.4.1 Adopt a Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Overlay District in the Zoning Ordinance

Action OS.3.4.2 Incorporate the Blackstone River Valley Regional Tourism Plan as an Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Action OS.3.4.3 Consider acquisition of lands adjacent to existing protected areas for protection of significant plant and animal populations and communities and to provide passive recreational opportunities.

Action OS.3.4.4 Coordinate efforts with the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley Natural Heritage Corridor Commission's plans for the Warner Trail extension from Diamond Hill State Park to the Blackstone River Bikeway.

Action OS.3.4.5 Incorporate the goals and strategies of the DEM and Blackstone River Watershed Council's 'Blackstone River Watershed Action Plan' to protect water quality into the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Goal OS.4 DEVELOP A DEFINITION OF ALLOWED USES FOR OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES AS DISTINCT FROM RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES.

Policy OS.4.1 Provide adequate resources for maintaining the Town's Open Space properties.

Action OS.4.1.1 Follow existing management plans for RIDEM assisted Town properties and develop management plans for other Town properties.

Action OS.4.1.2 Establish an Open Space Commission to oversee the acquisition and management of properties.