Yarmouth Land Stewardship Plan

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Executive Summary

Introduction
The Town of Yarmouth has undertaken a far-reaching land acquisition program over the last twenty years to provide public access to open space, outdoor recreation, and the protection of natural areas. The success of these efforts has resulted in the Town acquiring a diverse inventory of properties that require different sets of skills and methods to manage properly. However, the Town’s ability to meet these different management needs may not have kept pace with the demand. In order to provide better service to the public, the Town would like to reevaluate its current land management capabilities and then develop new policy and organizational solutions as needed to ensure that the Town’s valuable open spaces are properly cared for now and in the future.

Research Process

Staff and Committee Interviews Fall 2006
The consultant met individually with 13 town committees and community groups in the fall of 2006 to assess how the community perceived its open space needs and how well it carried out the management of town lands. In March of 2007, the consultant met with the Land Stewardship Plan Steering Committee to review these findings and determine the next steps in the process. It was decided that the consultant would meet with the committee chairs and staff of the committees involved in land management in order to develop a proposal for reorganization. The goal of reorganization was to improve the management of town lands, while also maintaining or improving the efficiency of town services.

Staff and Committee Chair Discussions Spring 2007
The consultant met with staff members and committee chairs in April of 2007. The meetings included one with staff only, one with both staff and committee chairs present, and a number of conversations with committee chairs only. The subject of discussion was to sort through two options for reorganization provided by the consultant. The findings and analysis that arose from this second round of discussions were presented to the Steering Committee in June of 2007. On the basis of the discussions at this meeting, along with some additional negotiations by telephone and email, a consensus for committee reorganization emerged.

Productivity Analysis
The consultant conducted a study of the productivity of the Yarmouth Parks Division in comparison to the park operations in four other communities in the region, concurrently with staff and committee interviews in the spring of 2007. The purpose of the research was to formulate recommendations for changes in park operations, or, in reaffirming the value of current operations, depending on how cost effective the division appeared to be on a relative basis.
Findings

Policy Perspectives

Open Space Consensus
The consensus on open space policy that drove the recommendations of the 1988 Public Access and Recreation Plan, the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Acquisition Bond may be breaking down to some degree. Two major factors appear to be responsible for this change. One, the town has experienced considerable success in acquiring park and conservation land since that time, causing a shift in the opinion of some residents toward better management of what the town already has rather than acquiring new land. The second factor is that both population growth and new development in Yarmouth have not continued at the same rapid pace that was apparent in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s.

Land Acquisition
In spite of what appears to be a reduced sense of urgency regarding land conservation in general, the members of the town boards, committees and community groups interviewed for this report frequently mentioned that limited and strategic acquisitions of land and easements may still be desirable in four situations:

1. Land that provides access to water and the shore for a variety of recreational purposes, including access to mooring sites, parking, dinghy storage, small boat launching and scenic views.

2. Land, rights-of-way or easements for sidewalks, walking trails and bike paths that link pedestrian and bicycle pathways throughout the community, especially where linkages are possible between existing town lands or between neighborhoods and existing public open spaces.

3. Land or easements that complete the protection of natural areas and improve public access within the Royal River Greenway. A few people also mentioned the need for a similar greenway along the Cousins River and cooperation with open space conservation along the town’s northwest border with Cumberland.

4. Land contiguous to existing town-owned properties in select locations, if these purchases significantly enhance the functional or aesthetic value of town lands.

Organizational Structure and Capacity

Yarmouth Community Services Advisory Committee
The YCSAC takes an interest in policy issues regarding athletic facilities and village parks, but has not always served in an educational and advocacy role in dealing with these lands. Moreover, the Committee seldom has the time to deal with planning and stewardship issues on large undeveloped parcels. As an advisory committee that deals with every aspect of the work undertaken by the Department of Community Services, its mission appears to have become too broad.
**Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park**

The Friends were formed and chartered by the town government for the purpose of raising funds, recruiting and organizing volunteers and providing oversight of Pratt’s Brook Park, but the needs of the park have outstripped the resources of the volunteers to manage the property. Meanwhile, other parks and conservation lands acquired since Pratt’s Brook Park also need oversight, advocacy and educational support. The Friends wish to continue supporting the management of the property, but they do not feel that it necessarily advantageous for them to do so under their present organizational framework.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Safety Committee**

The Bike/Ped Committee is nearing the end of its work in overseeing the planning and construction of the Beth Condon Memorial Pathway, and they have recently started refocusing on identifying and conserving pedestrian and bicycle connections between open spaces and neighborhoods town-wide. This work directly supports the new vision for open space proposed in Section 3.

**Harbor and Waterfront Committee**

The Harbor and Waterfront Committee is well focused on its mission of overseeing the planning and management of docks, mooring sites and channel depth in the town’s marine environment. Because of this focus, the Committee is perhaps not as well suited for the planning and management of shorefront properties that involve a wide variety of recreational activities and functions besides deep water access. Some of the uses that occur on land include sightseeing, wading, picnicking, bird watching, walking, running and bicycling. The planning and management of properties that serve these functions might be better handled by another group whose main focus is the development of park and open space land.

**Conservation Commission**

The Conservation Commission provides education and advocacy on town-wide environmental issues. For a number of years, it focused a great deal on Shoreland Zoning issues and was deeply involved in the review of development applications that came before the Planning Board. This effort was accompanied by some controversy. The Conservation Commission has been aware of the differing opinions on this subject and has recently taken measures to improve its image. Nonetheless, more could be done to ensure that the work of the Conservation Commission is better integrated with the other functions of town government.

**Yarmouth Community Services Department**

Yarmouth Community Services provides most of the money, labor and professional assistance used in managing town lands. It provides these services cost-effectively when compared to other communities in the region, but the Department can be stretched only so far. If the town’s large undeveloped parcels and conservation lands are to made more accessible and more useful to the public, the Department will need some additional staff time to assist in their day-to-day planning and management.
Recommendations

Open Space Planning

1. Implement the new vision for open space described in Section 5 for overall guidance in directing future land acquisition and land management policy.

2. Adopt the eco-recreational model described in Section 5 as a way of understanding the backbone of the town’s open space system and how it might be improved.

Committee Reorganization

1. Create a new Parks and Lands Committee to handle the planning and management of all town parks, conservation lands, waterfront sites and large undeveloped parcels.

2. Create a new School Grounds and Athletic Facilities Committee to handle the planning and management of all school grounds and athletic facilities, as well as the development and coordination of adult education and youth recreation programs.

3. Discontinue the YCS Advisory Committee, as its functions would be handled by the two new committees described above.


5. De-charter the Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park and encourage this volunteer group to work under the auspices of the newly formed YCS Land Stewardship Program (see below).

6. Keep the Harbor and Waterfront Committee focused on maritime matters by transferring the planning and management of waterfront parks to the new Parks and Lands Committee.

Town Government Communication

1. Encourage the newly formed committees to subdivide tasks and to stay focused on their mission through the use of subcommittees.

2. Improve the collaborative nature of town government by encouraging committees to report directly to the Town Council. Discontinue the use of council liaisons.

3. Train committees to assume a leadership role in town government. Basic skills that need to be reviewed or honed include an understanding of the collaborative nature of decision-making, reporting to the Town Council, running meetings, dealing with staff and consultants, and understanding the central role of advisory committees in policy development.

4. Help all town committees and community groups implement effective open space policy through an annual meeting of town staff, committees, and community groups working on land management and conservation issues.
Committee Reorganization Plan
For Improving the Management of Town Lands

- Formal authority, represented by the solid lines, proceeds from top to bottom and from left to right
- Staff support, represented by the dashed lines, shows the connection between Departments and the Advisory Committees
- Committees advise the Town Council directly, strengthening the collaborative nature of town government
- Departmental staff provide professional advice, institutional memory, and research for the Advisory Committees, in addition to administering programs and delivering services to the public

Figure 1
**Funding and Staff Support**

1. Hire a part-time conservation planner to provide staff support for the Parks and Lands Committee, assist in managing large undeveloped parcels and conservation lands, conduct mapping and research, develop informational materials and programs to inform the public about town lands, and administer the Land Stewardship Program. The conservation planner would report to the Director of Community Services.

2. Provide staff support to the School Grounds and Athletic Facilities Committee through the Community Services Director.

3. Provide staff support to subcommittees from existing town staff or consultants, as needed and appropriate, depending on the mission.

4. Provide additional funding for GIS research and mapping for use by town committees. The work would probably need to be done through contractual services, and can be administered by either the Planning Office or Community Services (the conservation planner).

**Programs**

1. Develop a Land Stewardship Program to recruit, train, and coordinate the volunteers working on town lands, as described in Section 8.

2. Develop educational materials and programs to keep the public informed about recreational opportunities, natural resource values and the management of town lands.
1.1 Study Background

The Town of Yarmouth has undertaken a far-reaching land acquisition program over the last twenty years to provide public access to open space, outdoor recreation, and the protection of natural areas. The success of these efforts has resulted in the Town acquiring a diverse inventory of properties that require different sets of skills and methods to manage properly. Unfortunately, the Town’s ability to meet these different management needs may not have kept pace with the demand. This is reflected in the reluctance of the Town Council to finance further acquisitions of open space without a clear sense of how the Town’s current landholdings are to be used and maintained. In order to address this problem, the Town would like to reevaluate its current land management capabilities and then develop new policy and organizational solutions as needed to ensure that the Town’s valuable open spaces are properly cared for now and in the future.

Property Policy of 2005 (Draft)

The Draft Property Policy provides a useful starting point for evaluating the Town’s land management capabilities. Among other possible uses, the Policy does the following:

- Categorizes lands by type and primary management responsibility
- Establishes broad guidelines for land acquisition and disposal
- Reflects a strong concern for flexibility in managing Town lands
- Assesses briefly the development potential of Town lands
- Identifies lands that have potential for sale or reuse

What the Property Policy does not do is:

- Assess the capacity of the various organizations involved in managing Town properties to carry out their mission
- Identify unmet maintenance and improvement needs of various properties or classes of properties
- Recommend organizational structures, staffing levels or funding needed to maintain Town properties at the level of service desired by the community

It is apparent that these last three items should be addressed through a study of the Town’s existing land management system. Thus, the Land Stewardship Plan begins where the Property Policy leaves off and becomes a logical continuation to the information and perspectives provided by that document.

Guiding Principles

It is useful to establish the guiding principles by which a land stewardship plan is developed. The following three general planning principles may be helpful in guiding the work:
1. Solutions to problems that are identified should generally not involve a change to existing successful operations, based on the time-tested principle that what is not broken should not be fixed.

2. The Plan should probably concentrate on the needs of properties that are not being met, rather than duplicating study and effort for the kinds of properties whose needs are already being well served.

3. Solutions should respect the institutions and political culture that have developed in Yarmouth over time, assuming that they are functioning well, based on the principle that municipal government and the society it serves is an organic whole with many interdependent parts.

1.2 Methodology of the Report

Task 1: Pre-Assessment Interviews

The first task was to interview the key personnel and volunteers in each agency or group involved in the management of Town lands for the following categories of information:

- Understanding of current programs and mission
- Expertise and commitment of staff relative to mission
- Sufficiency of current staffing
- Quality and quantity of equipment and training
- Sufficiency of funding
- Evaluation of current and future needs of the organization
- Ideas for solutions to identified needs

The Planning Consultant conducted one or more interviews with the 13 town committees, community groups and town department heads listed below between early September 2006 and the middle of January 2007. After each interview, the Consultant sent a written record of the topics discussed at the meetings to the individuals involved for their comment. The Planning Consultant then used the amended notes on these meetings as a source of data and ideas that guided the rest of the study. The interview process also included four tours of town properties: one with Dan Jellis, Town Engineer, two with Marcia Noyes, Director of Community Services, and one with the Conservation Commission. The meeting notes are summarized in Section 2.

Marcia Noyes, Director of Yarmouth Community Services
Community Services Advisory Committee
Conservation Commission
Dan Jellis, Town Engineer and Charlie Perkins, Harbormaster
Dawn Emerson, Planning Director
Henry Nichols, Royal River Conservation Trust
Marilyn Hinckley, Director, and Jim Barker, Trustee, Yarmouth Historical Society
Task 2: Assessment and Evaluation of Land Management Capability

The second task was to assess and evaluate the data gathered in Task 1 in order to determine the capability of the various agencies, groups, and programs in maintaining all categories of Town lands. As part of this research, the Planning Consultant compared the productivity of the Yarmouth Parks Division with four other communities in the region, using standardized evaluation techniques. The productivity study is described in Section 3. The findings from all sources of information analyzed in Task 1 are presented in Section 4.

Task 3: Researching Options for Solving Problems

The third task was to examine ways in which the problems in land management identified in Task 2 could be solved. Land management problems typically include fiscal issues, such as inadequate funding; organizational issues, such as the wrong agency or no agency being assigned to the task; or programmatic issues, such as unmet needs for mowing, trail maintenance, and marking of property boundaries. Based on the research, the Planning Consultant determined that Yarmouth’s principal problem is an outdated organizational framework dealing with land management, and secondarily, a lack of up-to-date policy work to guide open space and land management planning. There are also a variety of management issues that should be addressed on individual properties.

The Planning Consultant presented these findings to the Land Stewardship Steering Committee in March of 2007. The Steering Committee then recommended that the Planning Consultant conduct a second round of interviews and discussions with town staff and committees in order to develop a plan for reorganizing the committees that deal with land management. This was done in April and May of 2007, and a proposed reorganization plan was presented to the Steering Committee and approved in June of 2007.

Concepts that may be useful in guiding further open space planning in Yarmouth are presented in Section 5. The proposed committee reorganization plan is presented in Section 6. Additional recommendations for improving committee operations and Town government communication are presented in Sections 7 and 8.
2.1 Contrasting Policy Perspectives

It became evident from the interviews that people from different departments and community groups shared slightly different policy perspectives toward land acquisition and management in Yarmouth. These differences appear to have arisen partly as a result of the relative success of the Town’s open space program over the past twenty years, but also as a result of differences in ideology regarding the importance of land conservation in the face of rapid development. The range of opinions on these matters can be illustrated through a question and answer format. In the text below, four questions important to people in Yarmouth today regarding their ideas on open space are posed and answered. One set of views are summarized in the form of arguments indicating a yes answer to the question. Another set of views are summarized in the form of arguments indicating a no to the question.

1. Does the town already own enough open space land?

**Yes, let’s concentrate on managing the land that we already have.**

- The town already owns about 830 acres, or about 10% of the town’s land base (not including water).
- The town has spent the 1989 land acquisition bond and other funds on acquiring much of this land since the Public Access and Recreation Plan set goals for open space nineteen years ago.
- Many of the new acquisitions, such as the Sweetsir, Parks and Barker parcels, are hardly known or used by the public. Even Pratt’s Brook Park is not heavily used, except in winter when there is adequate snow cover for cross-country skiing.
- Managing what we have doesn’t preclude acquiring land where it is still needed, such as providing additional deep water and shorefront and trail connections.

**No, there is still work to do if we want to maintain a high quality of life and protect our environment in the future.**

- Land does not need to be actively managed to maintain itself. Trees grow by themselves and land can be banked for future use without harm to the property or cost to town government.
- The price of real estate is only going to escalate as development pressure increases over time. Thus, the time to complete an open space program is now while there is still a substantial amount of undeveloped land potentially available.
- Additional acquisitions are needed to complete the Royal River Greenway, round out acquisitions in and around Pratt’s Brook Park and the Parks property, create trail linkages town-wide and protect scenic quality and wildlife habitat, especially in shoreland areas.
2. Should the town pay for additional acquisitions of open space through taxation?

*Generally no, unless the property is spectacular.*

- People are tired of high taxes and open space acquisition must compete with many other demands for town services.
- Since the town already owns a great deal of land, future open space in the community should be acquired mainly in the private sector through incentives for open space subdivisions, limited development schemes, selling some existing town properties for more valuable land elsewhere and the work of the Royal River Conservation Trust.
- Obviously, the town can still participate in open space purchases by partnering with the private sector. In this case, the town’s share of the purchase price might be paid for by selling surplus town property. Another option for raising money might be to sell development rights on certain town lands while holding conservation easements or imposing building restrictions on the most environmentally sensitive areas on those properties.

*Yes, the town needs to be ready to step forward with funding for open space, even though the portion of the cost borne by the town may not be as great as it was in the past.*

- The purchase of the Bayview Preserve is a prime example of how a limited amount of town money can be stretched a long way by leveraging funding from state and federal sources and by encouraging private donations.
- Landowners and developers who make a prime property available for purchase are usually working within a short time frame, making it necessary to raise a lot of money quickly. Participation by the town under these circumstances can often make the difference between acquiring valuable new open space or just another lost opportunity.

3. Should the town be willing to sell town land or development rights to town land if these areas are not really needed for open space or some other town function?

*Yes, definitely. This is just common sense and good financial practice.*

- There are probably a number of town-owned parcels or portions of parcels that have limited uses for the public. These lots can and should be sold in order to raise money for purchasing more valuable open space somewhere else.

*Generally yes, but not if the parcel in question was acquired for the express purpose of conserving open space in the first place.*

- Selling land that was originally acquired for open space purposes is a violation of the public trust and runs counter to long term continuity in the town’s open space program.
- Even if a property was not originally acquired for open space purposes, it’s potential for open space in the future should be evaluated in the light of development trends, increases in population and the need for park and recreation land as new neighborhoods are built.
4. Should town lands acquired mainly for passive outdoor recreation and conservation be permanently protected from development by a conservation easement or some other deed restriction that limits future uses of the property?

No. The town should always keep its options open in order to meet changing circumstances.

- No one can predict what new challenges or opportunities the town may face in the future. Even town properties that now seem perfectly suited for permanent protection might turn out to be less valuable for this purpose in the future as our knowledge of conservation grows and other opportunities arise.
- Alternatively, it is possible that town will face a dire need for space for some essential municipal purpose, be it education, public works, storage, or otherwise, that we cannot now anticipate, but which a property presently designated as a conservation area might well be suited.
- Permanent protection of a property even limits our ability to sell a less valuable open space parcel for a more valuable one.

Generally yes, if the property has indeed been purchased with the understanding that it was to remain as open space and if the outdoor recreation and natural resource values of the property are obviously high.

- Town policies are always changing and the institutional memories of town boards and committees also change, as there is turnover in membership and town staff over time. Consequently, the vision of open space that motivated the purchase of some of the town’s most spectacular natural areas might be temporarily forgotten in the heat and turmoil of planning some new program or project. Protecting some of these properties from development permanently insulates them from this potential shortsightedness and honors the long-term public trust.
- Permanent protection for the most valuable open spaces also provides a strong foundation for the entire open space program. No new land is being made and development pressure town-wide over the long run can only become more intense.
- It follows that the conservation value of a property that is permanently protected by an easement is only likely to increase, not decrease, as time goes on. Permanent protection builds public confidence that the money spent for acquiring open space today will continue to benefit our children and grandchildren far into the future.

2.2 Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity for land acquisition and management has three aspects: funding, staff support, and the political culture of the community. The first two are important mainly from the point of view of daily operations and the ability to take action on a project when needed. The third is important from the point of view of how a community works together to solve problems regarding open space planning and implementation. The interviews suggest that Yarmouth has excellent organizational capacity for town government in general, but is perhaps somewhat deficient at this time in the area of land management. In addition, although the town’s organizational capacity for working toward acquisition of new open space has been high in the past, it may be somewhat more restricted in the future, unless a new consensus on open space policy is achieved.
Community Services

- Excellent administration and small group cohesion among office and maintenance staff.
- Resources are generally adequate for the management of school grounds, athletic fields, the Yarmouth Athletic Complex and village parks, with the exceptions noted below (approximately 75% of YCS staff time and money allocated to land management is used on these areas).
- Interdepartmental cooperation on day-to-day land management issues (police, town engineer, public works, and school department) is excellent, although between the YCS and the school department there is a gray area where neither department has the clearly defined responsibility for leading the work on policy planning, advocacy and development of the CIP.
- The authority to manage trees on school grounds and village parks is shared among YCS, the school department and the tree warden. Trees that pose an obvious hazard are usually removed in a timely fashion in spite of this divided authority, but none of these groups have the equipment or staff to keep up with all of the tree pruning and maintenance needed near buildings and grounds heavily used by the public.
- YCS capacity in terms of staffing, budget or authority appears to be insufficient in the following instances:
  - Management planning for conservation properties.
  - Trail design and management on large undeveloped parcels.
  - Pruning and maintaining trees on all lands managed by the YCS.
  - Maintenance of shrub and flower beds town-wide.
  - Resolving user conflicts on conservation lands.
  - Solving erosion control, parking and other management problems on park and open space lands.
  - The town’s capital improvement budget does not appear to have a fund for the restoration of the turf at the YAC (expect about 12 year life expectancy).

Police Department, Town Engineer and Harbor and Waterfront Committee

- Staffing and budget appear to be adequate for design, management and policy making for deep water access, including boat launches, wharves, docks, mooring sites, and marine patrol.
- Present staffing whereby one police officer plays multiple roles as harbormaster, marine patrol officer and shellfish warden is working well.
- Some of the problems encountered in planning and implementing solutions to new deep water access sites, such as Madeleine Point, are due partly to inevitable user conflicts and neighborhood concerns, rather than organizational capacity. However, these problems are heightened because of the small size and scarcity of town-owned access to waterfront property relative to the demand for these areas.
- The available space for mooring sites exceeds the space on the shore for dinghy storage in most locations, with the possible exception of Town Landing on the Royal River.
• Interdepartmental cooperation (police, town engineer, public works, YCS) is excellent.

School Department and School Committee
• The school department and school committee are very satisfied with the management of school grounds, athletic fields and the YAC by the YCS.
• Neither the YCS nor the school department has been assigned the lead role at the level of policy planning and the development of the CIP, as mentioned above. The superintendent is aware of this problem and has urged the Athletic Director to work more closely with the YCS Director on long range planning.
• There was some discussion concerning the need for an updated evaluation of athletic field capacity and how this might be addressed by the Land Stewardship Plan. The School Committee decided that the school district consolidation plan passed by the legislature demanded their attention instead, at least for the time being.

Town Council
• Excellent administrative support and institutional memory are provided by the town manager and department heads.
• Council members are actively engaged as liaisons on numerous committees, helping to ensure communication between the council and committees, as well as council support for committee programs.
• Periodic turnover in council membership may sometimes shift the emphasis in policy on land acquisition and management. The present council is concerned about the cost of town services and is sensitive to complaints by residents about high taxes. This concern is translated into a reluctance to purchase additional properties for conservation purposes and an interest in managing the lands that the town already owns in a way that makes them better known and available to the public.
• Council members endorse creative approaches to the conservation of open space that do not require substantial town subsidies, including limited development, reuse or sale of unneeded town properties, incentives for open space subdivisions and support for conservation efforts by the private sector, such as the Royal River Conservation Trust.

Comprehensive Plan Committee
• At the time of writing, the Committee has finished its research on progress made since adoption of the last Comprehensive Plan in 1993, a public opinion survey, and a first draft of recommendations for the new plan.
• Preliminary discussions by the committee and the public to date suggest that there is a general feeling of satisfaction with the progress the town has made in conserving open space and that there is still widespread support for maintaining and protecting the quality of life in the community. However, the extent to which these generalized attitudes translate into support for improved land management on town lands or new acquisitions in areas like the Royal River Greenway has yet to be determined.
Community Services Advisory Committee

- Staffing, budget and interdepartmental communication are all very good.
- Most of the resources and attention of the committee are devoted to school grounds, athletic fields, the YAC and village parks. The interest and expertise of the members are also concentrated in these areas.
- Committee members do not really have the time to deal with conservation land planning and management.

Conservation Commission

- The Commission does not have regular staff but would appreciate administrative assistance for organizing meetings, preparing reports, taking minutes and similar technical matters (6-8 hrs monthly), plus technical assistance for the design and production of maps in GIS (about 8 hrs monthly).
- The budget is generally adequate for routine operating expenses.
- The membership includes well-trained professionals who provide expert advice on environmental issues at no cost to the community.
- Commissioners prefer to focus on broad policy issues, raising public awareness on environmental matters, project review and overall planning for town conservation lands. They would prefer to avoid involvement in the day-to-day management of town-owned properties.
- The Commission has been a leader in trail planning and development in the past, but has not been focused on this mission recently. There is some doubt on the part of the membership if they have the time for this work after taking into account their other commitments.
- Commission members sometimes feel that their work is not always understood or appreciated by other town boards and committees, especially in the arena of project review. They are working on improving their relationships with other town boards and committees and with the community as a whole.

Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park

- The Friends were very active in their first few years using volunteer labor to build and maintain trails and helping to organize public forums on hunting policy.
- Volunteer enthusiasm has waned over the years as the amount of maintenance at the park has increased, and as the ski team has moved most of its training to Twin Brook Park in Cumberland, where snowmaking helps to maintain a more reliable snow cover for cross country skiing.
- Maintenance needs at the park exceed the capacity of both volunteers and staff to keep up with the work. Typical unmet needs include erosion, potholing, and blowdowns. Damaged and fallen trees pose a safety hazard.
- The original mission of the Friends was to raise money and volunteer labor, while the town retained all real decision-making authority. This unequal sharing of power and resources seems to have become obsolete with the passing of the years and the increasing need for maintenance at the park. The result is that the organizational structure of the Friends no longer appears to be serving its original purpose.
Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Safety Committee

- The committee is very satisfied with its budget, staff support and interdepartmental communication.
- The committee was instrumental in taking advantage of state and federal transportation funds for the planning and construction of the Beth Condon Memorial Pathway. As this project winds down, however, the committee has begun to wonder what its future mission should be.
- The committee was originally formed from a group that helped to plan and implement the sidewalk at Cousins Island, as well as other projects, as far back as twenty years ago. Some members of the committee may be interested in playing a lead role again in trail, sidewalk and pathway planning town-wide, in the absence of a significant role in this area by other town boards and committees.

Yarmouth Historical Society

- Although the society does not manage town land, it benefits from town support for the Merrill Memorial Library, where its offices, museum and gift shop are located. The Society also benefits from town support through the school system, where the society conducts educational programs on Yarmouth history for elementary school students.
- The YHS has outgrown the space it occupies at the library and it would like to build a new facility within the village, where there is a steady stream of visitors to area schools, parks, shops, municipal offices, churches and the library.
- YHS can raise the money for the construction of a new building and parking lot, but the issue of location is unresolved. The proposal to use a part of Royal River Park for this purpose has been controversial.

Royal River Conservation Trust

- The RRCT is an important partner in working with the town on land acquisition and protection efforts. Its primary role is technical assistance in conservation planning, fund raising, and holding conservation easements to protect the natural resource and outdoor recreation values of properties.
- The RRCT has recently hired a land steward to lead planning and management of its 5 fee-owned properties and 25 conservation easements. The 24-hour, three day per week position is being funded for two years by a grant from the Land Trust Alliance.
- The capacity of RRCT to manage its own properties and easements is barely adequate, even with the Land Trust Alliance grant (the Executive Director is the only permanent employee). The organization is very willing to work closely with the town to provide better funded and more secure land stewardship on both town and RRCT conservation lands.
3.1 Research Issues

A Relative Measure of Performance

Comparing cost-effectiveness of the Yarmouth Parks Division to other towns in the region is a way of measuring relative, rather than absolute, performance. The standard used is the current practice by the industry, rather than criteria established independently by the community or another body of public opinion. Such a method improves the community’s perspective on the cost-effectiveness of its own programs, but it does not necessarily provide guidance in terms of the community’s long-term goals for open space and recreation relative to the demand for other town services.

Eliminating Bias

There are three main sources of bias in attempting to compare one town with another in this manner.

1. Towns maintain different numbers and types of facilities, and so a method must be found to relate cost to output in a way that takes these differences into account.
2. Towns classify their park facilities differently for inventory and public information purposes, and so the information provided by their park divisions on what they maintain cannot be accepted at face value, but must be interpreted and analyzed according to a common standard.
3. Towns have different ways of budgeting the annual expenses of their park divisions, and so park budgets cannot be compared directly, at least without some alteration to eliminate these differences.

When solutions to these three forms of bias are found, the result will be an inventory of park facilities and an analysis of costs that may appear unfamiliar from the point of view of the communities whose programs are being evaluated.

Three Measures of Productivity

Three independent measures were used to measure the productivity of park divisions. Each has the advantage of eliminating the three forms of bias discussed in 1.1.2, and so they collectively provide a reasonably objective comparison of one department’s performance versus another. Nonetheless, the results are still subject to interpretation. In particular, it should be emphasized that the differences in performance appear to be mainly the result of how urbanized the park systems are, rather than the result of superior management or more efficient operations. In other words, park departments tend to have higher labor costs, higher costs per facility and higher costs per acre of actively managed land the more developed and intensely used park properties become. This subject will be addressed in greater detail later in the report.
3.2 Methodologies

Cost Per Work Unit
This method is a relative measure of a department’s approximate overall output, expressed quantitatively in the form of work units. Work units are assigned to facilities according to the relative amount of energy, labor and materials that are needed to maintain them. The total number of work units earned by a department is calculated by multiplying the number of facilities of each type by their work unit value and then summing the results. When the park budget is divided by the total number of work units, the result is the cost per work unit. This number can then be used to compare the productivity of one park division with another, because the bias caused by the different number and type of facilities maintained in each community has been largely eliminated.

Cost Per Acre
The cost per acre method provides an alternative measure of a park division’s productivity, and it is easier to calculate than the work unit method. In this instance, the park budget is divided by the total number of acres of land that are actively managed by the department. Actively managed land includes only the areas actually mowed, planted or physically altered in some way by park personnel. It does not include undeveloped land, such as forest land, wetlands, and water bodies. The department may have formal authority over these areas, but it does not really need to expend any money or effort to manage them. Because the method does not take into account what kinds of facilities are located on the land or how much these facilities are used by the public, it must be used with discretion in evaluating productivity.

Labor Cost as a Percentage of Total Cost
Labor cost is a traditional measure of productivity in the United States, where the objective is always to do as much work as possible with as few people as possible. In measuring the productivity of park divisions, the method may not always be fair, since the method is biased in favor of large properties that can be maintained with machinery, such as athletic fields and farm fields, as compared to smaller or more complex properties that require more labor, such as urban parks with fountains and flower gardens. Nonetheless, the method is useful when these peculiarities are taken into account and when it is one of a number of different methods used to assess productivity.

Inventories
The work unit method and the cost per acre method require a careful inventory of the facilities and land managed by a department. In the case of the work unit method, the inventory includes not only a listing of the areas managed by the parks division, but also their classification into different facility types, in order to assign work unit values. In the case of the cost per acre method, acres of land that are actively managed must be enumerated separately from all other lands that are nominally managed by the division. In both instances, the information provided by park personnel regarding these matters cannot be relied upon at face value, since towns often classify their properties and calculate acreage of actively managed land quite differently from the way needed in this analysis. Consequently, the inventories used in this report were made largely on the basis of aerial photo interpretation, along with windshield surveys and some on site visits by the consultant, rather than data provided by the departments involved. The result will surely include some errors, but these errors likely to be
distributed randomly across all five towns studied, rather than causing a bias in favor one park division or another.

**Towns Chosen for Comparison**

The productivity of the park divisions in four towns were chosen to compare with the park division in Yarmouth. Cumberland and Falmouth were chosen because they bear some similarity to Yarmouth in terms of income and demographics, and in having relatively well-developed park systems. Scarborough was chosen because it has a park system quite different from those in the other towns studied. In addition to its school properties, which are essentially similar to the school properties in other towns in the region, the park system consists in a relatively small number of well-planned, well-used parks that were donated mainly by developers in new subdivisions. South Portland was chosen because it is the most urbanized of the five towns studied. Its park division maintains a wide variety of properties and types of facilities, including village parks, athletic fields, natural areas and historic sites, that offer a useful comparison to the park systems in more suburban communities.

### 3.3 Calculating Work Units (Work Unit Method Only)

**Areas Maintained by Volunteers**

Any property that was managed actively for open space and recreation that was town-owned was included as part of the study, even if the area was operated entirely or in part by volunteers or community groups. The effect of this rule is that a community where volunteers are active and well-organized will appear to be more productive, as the facility run by the volunteers will be counted for its work unit values, but not for its cost to the town. A typical example is how the cost of maintaining Little League Fields located on town land is often subsidized to a great extent by the local chapter of Little League. Another common example is how the cost of mowing and haying of farm fields on town land is often performed by local farmers, who take the hay for their own use, or by volunteers using their own tractors.

**Athletic Fields**

Athletic fields are counted only once in an inventory. Natural turf fields that meet league standards for size and condition are assigned a work unit value of 6. Fields that are substandard in terms of size, shape or condition are counted only as practice fields and assigned a value of 2. Artificial turf fields are assigned a value of 24, since they are equivalent in productive output to about 4 natural turf fields, even though their operating cost is lower. Consequently, from the point of view of evaluating productivity, the inclusion of an artificial field in a park division’s inventory is beneficial.

**Village Parks**

Village parks are the general use green areas maintained by the park division in towns and villages. They typically contain lawns, shade trees, pathways, benches, picnic tables, shrub beds, flower gardens, ponds, waterfalls, historic ruins and fountains. They are assigned a work unit value of 1 per acre of actively managed land. Natural areas, such as forests, wetlands, ponds and tidal areas contained within a village park are not counted toward the acreage, since they do not require maintenance. From the point of view of assigning work unit values, small areas near highways, at the end of cul-de-sacs and along old rights-of-way that are mowed by the park division are also assigned a work unit value of 1. For inventory purposes, these areas are sometimes included in the acreage of village parks. Otherwise, they are broken out and
enumerated separately. The acreage of athletic fields that are located within a village park are not counted toward the total, but are assigned work units separately, as described in 5.3.2.

**Special Features**

Most park systems contain a variety of special features that are assigned a work unit value independently of where they are located or the acreage involved, and so they are listed separately in for inventory purposes. Typical examples include tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, outdoor skating rinks, cross country ski trails, greenways, swimming beaches staffed with life guards, and boat ramps. The work unit value assigned to these facilities is added to the acreage of the village park or school property where they occur, and so they tend to add extra value to the total park system as a whole. The swimming beaches at Ferry Beach and Hurd Park in Scarborough are not treated as special features, however, because they are not staffed with life guards. Instead, they are assigned 1 work unit per acre, the same as village parks.

**Landscaped Areas Around Schools and Municipal Buildings**

In the work unit method, the landscaped areas around school and municipal buildings maintained by the park division are assigned a standard work unit value per building. School buildings are credited with 3 units each, whereas municipal buildings are credited with only 1. The reason for the discrepancy is that school grounds are usually larger and more complicated than the grounds around municipal buildings. In the cost per acre method, the acreage of school grounds and municipal areas are calculated directly.

**A Note Concerning the Cost per Acre Method**

In the cost per acre method, all of the land actively managed by the parks division is counted toward the total. The two exceptions include natural, undeveloped land, as discussed in 3.2., and the acreage occupied by buildings and parking lots on school properties. Note, however, that the park divisions in two communities studied do not manage school properties, a fact which has an important impact on the analysis, as discussed later in the report.

### 3.4 Making Budgets Comparable (Applies to all Methods)

**Operating Costs Only**

The one year operating costs used for analysis purposes were those projected in the 2006-2007 municipal budget for the parks division in each of the five communities studied. With the exception of Falmouth, these costs include only one year of operating expenses, and do not include reserve accounts for capital improvements. The reserve accounts listed for C.I.P. purposes provide a more accurate picture of the total long term cost of the park system, but for analysis purposes it was necessary to remove these line items from the Falmouth budget.

**Salaries and Fringe Benefits**

All five towns in the study include the salaries of all the full and part time park personnel, as well overtime pay, in their annual budgets. In addition, Yarmouth and Falmouth include a portion of the community services director’s salary, while Falmouth and Scarborough include the cost of fringe benefits for park division personnel. Both of these categories of costs were deleted from the analysis in order to ensure comparability. Most of the communities with a large park system also have a park manager who handles most of the day to day decision-making and supervision of the park division, and the salary of this individual is, of course,
included in the annual budget. One exception is Scarborough, which is surprising considering how much work the department must do. The need for someone in this middle management role has become evident, however, in that Scarborough is adding such a position in fiscal year 2007-2008. Because this additional labor cost in Scarborough will be long-term, and become it almost certainly reflects a long-standing need that has not been addressed previously, the cost of this position has been included in the analysis, even though, strictly speaking, this cost does not appear in Scarborough’s 2006-2007 budget.

**Special Line Items**

In South Portland, contributions to cemetery maintenance and the street tree program are included in the park budget, whereas in the other communities these costs are itemized separately. Conversely, in Scarborough, the ice skating rink at Memorial Park is not included in the park budget, whereas similar facilities elsewhere are. In order to even out these discrepancies, the cemetery donations and street tree program in South Portland were deleted from the analysis, but the ice skating rink in Scarborough was included.

**Fees**

Most communities charge a fee for participation in recreation programs and for use of some park facilities, such as swimming beaches and boat ramps. These fees greatly defray the cost of the general community services budgets in many communities, although not specifically the park budgets. Generally, towns assume that park departments must be funded through a general appropriation, whereas recreation programs are expected to be largely self-supporting through user fees. Consequently, following conventional practice, the fees charged for boat ramps, swimming beaches and similar park facilities in this study are not included in the analysis of park division costs.

### 3.5 Summary of Results

**Three Charts**

The graphs for cost per work unit, cost per acre and labor cost as a percentage of total cost are included below. The cost per work unit graph shows a steady progression in cost from the least populated to the most populated community in the study (Cumberland is the least populated, although it appears in second place on the graph). The cost per acre shows what appears to be a distinct advantage for Cumberland and Falmouth and a higher cost for Scarborough, a pattern that doesn’t seem to coincide with the results from the cost per work unit method. The third graph indicates that labor cost as a percentage of total cost is similar in all five communities, with the possible exception of Scarborough.

**Cost per Work Unit**

The reason for the increasing cost per work unit in the five communities, correlating quite strongly with total population, is not immediately evident. The cost per acre method and the labor cost method do not appear to shed much light on this question. In addition, attempts to decipher this pattern based on an analysis of individual line items in the departmental budgets also does not seem to offer an answer. Energy costs, for example, vary slightly in each community, from a low of about 4.1 percent to a high of about 9.5 percent, but there was no discernible pattern to these differences. A comparison of contractual services costs yielded equally variable results. Part of the difficulty in analyzing this subject is the variability in how
park department’s account for their costs, but there is another explanation which is discussed at greater length later in 3.6.

**Cost / Work Unit**

![Cost / Work Unit Graph](image1)

**Figure 2**

**Cost / Acre**

![Cost / Acre Graph](image2)

**Figure 3**

**Cost per Acre**

An explanation for the pattern revealed by the cost per acre method seems more obvious. The advantage apparently enjoyed by Cumberland and Falmouth is easily explained by two factors. One, the park divisions in these two communities do not manage school properties, which are complicated sites to manage. Second, both towns have invested in large recreation areas that contain numerous athletic fields and hay fields on former farmland. Such sites are relatively easy and quick to maintain with machinery. In contrast, the acreage in a park system with a
higher percentage of land in village parks and school grounds contains many smaller parcels with irregular configurations, as well as lands containing high maintenance features such as monuments, sidewalks, trails, fences, benches, flower gardens, shrub beds, and trees. As for the relatively high cost per acre in Scarborough, this is almost certainly the result of the fact that its park system is relatively small in terms of acreage, but heavily used.

**Labor Cost as a Percentage of Total Cost**

Labor cost for most of the park divisions studied was close to the average of 61%, with the exception of Scarborough, which is quite a bit lower at 38%. The graph suggests that park work in general is a fairly labor intensive activity and that as a proportion of total park costs labor varies less than many other factors which have been studied. The reason for the low labor cost shown for Scarborough is not immediately apparent without further investigation.

![Labor Cost / Total Cost](image)

**3.6 Analysis**

**Yarmouth Doing Well**

Although the research raises some questions that cannot be answered without more work, it is clear that the Yarmouth park division scores above average in productivity and below average in cost as measured by all three methods used in the study. The cost per work unit, which is perhaps the most reliable indicator, shows that Yarmouth is second only to Cumberland in overall productivity. Yarmouth also scores well below average for cost per acre, even though the park division maintains a wide variety of properties, including village parks and school properties that often contain small and irregular areas that are time consuming or difficult to manage. Moreover, Yarmouth’s productivity as measured by labor cost is also above average, as it is second, again, only to Cumberland.
Correlation Between Cost and Population

The evidence shows that there is a correlation between population size and the approximate relative cost of park departments in the region. A correlation, of course, does not prove that there is any meaningful relationship between the two factors involved. It is quite possible, for example, that the apparent correlation is simply the result of coincidence or a bias in the methodology used. On the other hand, from general observation, it is possible to surmise that the increasing cost per work unit shown in the research is the result of the overall increasing complexity and use of a park system that occurs as towns increase in size. If so, this would vindicate the use of the cost per work unit method, which is designed to eliminate the potential bias caused by trying to interpret budget costs when there are different numbers and types of facilities managed in each community.

The Issue of Size and Complexity

If the hypothesis in 5.6 is correct, then it could explain why an analysis of individual line items in a park division budget does not yield much useful information about why the overall cost per work unit is smaller or greater in any given community. A more useful approach may be to examine the nature and type of facilities involved. In larger communities with active park departments, park systems necessarily become larger and more complicated. Complexity in this instance means areas with small or irregular shapes difficult to mow or areas with a variety of features, such as trails and flower gardens, that are difficult to maintain. Complexity may also be revealed by increased labor costs, as occurs at Willard Beach in South Portland, where park costs increase due to the provision of increased services and facilities, including a bathhouse, concession stand, picnic tables, playground, and life guards. Indeed, South Portland has the highest cost per work unit as well as the highest labor cost of any community in this study, but then South Portland also has the most developed and in some ways the most interesting park system of any town reviewed in the study.

Productivity vs Levels of Service

This study has used fairly conventional methods to evaluate productivity. Nonetheless, productivity as measured in work units or labor cost is not always the best measure of a park system’s performance. By and large, most people support parks because of their aesthetic value, accessibility, safety and recreational value, rather than cost, all other things being equal. Thus, productivity should not be confused with levels of service. The Yarmouth parks division has a relatively high productivity rating as measured in this study, and South Portland appears to have a lower one by the same measures. Yet, it would be erroneous to conclude based on this evidence that South Portland’s park division is doing something wrong or inefficient. It is just as likely that South Portland’s park division is doing the best it can relative to the levels of service it is expected to provide and the resources it is given to do the job. Indeed, the cost per work unit method suggests that South Portland’s park division faces an inherently more expensive situation, given the more urbanized nature of its park system.

3.7 Conclusions

No Substantive Change Necessary

The productivity analysis for the five towns included in this study suggests that no substantive change in the operation of the Yarmouth parks division appears to be necessary. The division’s productivity is above average and its costs are below average as measured by all three methods used in this report. Nonetheless, this advantage may due more to the particular mix of facilities
currently being managed by the division, rather than by superior skill or efficiency on the part of park staff and the director. Factors favoring this advantage include the relatively large number and type of facilities managed by the staff, the use of synthetic turf at the Yarmouth Athletic Complex, and the relative concentration of fields and grounds on school properties (parks and school grounds in some communities are more dispersed and smaller in size).

Factors Leading to Lower Productivity
Factors leading to lower productivity in a park system are often associated with increased levels of service. Principal among these factors would be an increase in buildings, utilities and labor intensive activities. If a community wishes to improve recreational services in this manner, it would be an incentive to consider greater regionalization in order to spread both capital costs and operating costs of these new facilities. To a certain extent, it can be said that this has already happened with the Yarmouth Athletic Complex. Any community that has a synthetic turf field finds its field in high demand regionally, and it can recoup some of its operating and/or capital costs for the field through its fee system. Yarmouth Community Services has begun charging for the use of the YAC, but this potential benefit has probably not yet been fully implemented or realized.

Neutral Factors
Some types of park properties and facilities have little effect on the overall productivity of a park division, simply because they do not require any real work to manage. Typical examples include undeveloped land and farmland. Although these properties may require substantial upfront costs to acquire, they require very little cost to maintain and manage over a long period of time, at least in comparison to more developed park sites such as athletic fields and parks.

A case in point is Cumberland’s park system, which consists for the most part of undeveloped conservation land. The large acreage in this park system hardly affects the park division’s operating costs, which are devoted mostly to the athletic fields at Twin Brook, the Town Common, and a few other typical park sites. Of course, there is some cost to the development and maintenance of the small parking lots, trails and signs used in these areas, but again, the cost is minimal compared to more conventional park facilities. An apparent exception to this rule is the construction and periodic repair or replacement of bridges, pathways and landscaping in multiple use trail systems and bike paths, but these facilities are more accurately classified as long, linear parks rather than trails. The Eastern Trail in South Portland and Scarborough and the Beth Condon Memorial Pathway in Yarmouth are examples of this latter type of facility.
4.1 Policy Perspectives

**Open Space Consensus**
The consensus on open space policy that drove the recommendations of the 1988 Public Access and Recreation Plan, the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Acquisition Bond may be breaking down to some degree. Two major factors appear to be responsible for this change. One, the town has experienced considerable success in acquiring park and conservation land since that time, causing a shift in the opinion of some residents toward better management of what the town already has rather than acquiring new land. The second factor is that both population growth and new development in Yarmouth have not continued at the same rapid pace that was apparent in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

**Land Acquisition**
In spite of what appears to be a reduced sense of urgency regarding land conservation in general, the members of the town boards, committees and community groups interviewed for this report frequently mentioned that limited and strategic acquisitions of land and easements may still be desirable in four situations:

1. Land that provides access to water and the shore for a variety of recreational purposes, including access to mooring sites, parking, dinghy storage, small boat launching and scenic views.

2. Land, rights-of-way or easements for sidewalks, walking trails and bike paths that link pedestrian and bicycle pathways throughout the community, especially where linkages are possible between existing town lands or between neighborhoods and existing public open spaces.

3. Land or easements that complete the protection of natural areas and improve public access within the Royal River Greenway. A few people also mentioned the need for a similar greenway along the Cousins River.

4. Land contiguous to existing town-owned properties in select locations, if these purchases significantly enhance the functional or aesthetic value of town lands.

4.2 Organizational Structure and Capacity

**Yarmouth Community Services Advisory Committee**
The YCSAC takes an interest in policy issues regarding athletic facilities and village parks, but has not always served in an educational and advocacy role in dealing with these lands. Moreover, the Committee seldom has the time to deal with planning and stewardship issues on large undeveloped parcels. As an advisory committee that deals with every aspect of the work undertaken by the Department of Community Services, its mission appears to have become too broad.
Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park
The Friends were formed and chartered by the town government for the purpose of raising funds, recruiting and organizing volunteers and providing oversight of Pratt’s Brook Park, but the needs of the park have outstripped the resources of the volunteers to manage the property. Meanwhile, other parks and conservation lands acquired since Pratt’s Brook Park also need oversight, advocacy and educational support. The Friends wish to continue supporting the management of the property, but they do not feel that it necessarily advantageous for them to do so under their present organizational framework.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Safety Committee
The Bike/Ped Committee is nearing the end of its work in overseeing the planning and construction of the Beth Condon Memorial Pathway, and they have recently started refocusing on identifying and conserving pedestrian and bicycle connections between open spaces and neighborhoods town-wide. This work directly supports the new vision for open space proposed in the Preliminary Report.

Harbor and Waterfront Committee
The Harbor and Waterfront Committee is well focused on its mission of overseeing the planning and management of docks, mooring sites and channel depth in the town’s marine environment. Because of this focus, the Committee is perhaps not as well suited for the planning and management of shorefront properties that involve a wide variety of recreational activities and functions besides deep water access. Some of the uses that occur on land include sightseeing, wading, picnicking, bird watching, walking, running and bicycling. The planning and management of properties that serve these functions might be better handled by another group whose main focus is the development of park and open space land.

Conservation Commission
The Conservation Commission provides education and advocacy on town-wide environmental issues. For a number of years, it focused a great deal on Shoreland Zoning issues and was deeply involved in the review of development applications that came before the Planning Board. This effort was accompanied by some controversy. The Conservation Commission has been aware of the differing opinions on this subject and has recently taken measures to improve its image. Nonetheless, more could be done to ensure that the work of the Conservation Commission is better integrated with the other functions of town government.

Yarmouth Community Services Department
Yarmouth Community Services provides most of the money, labor and professional assistance used in managing town lands. It provides these services cost-effectively when compared to other communities in the region, but the Department can be stretched only so far. If the town’s large undeveloped parcels and conservation lands are to made more accessible and more useful to the public, the Department will need some additional staff time to assist in their day-to-day planning and management.
4.3 Land Management

Conservation Lands
The town currently lacks the resources in terms of funding, staff and mission to properly manage the town’s large undeveloped parcels and conservation lands. The principal properties that fall into this category are Sweetsir, Barker, Parks, Pratt’s Brook Park, Bay-view, Camp Soci, Sandy Point Beach, Tinker and Fels-Groves. The inability to manage these lands effectively is reflected in the lack of management planning for these properties, absence of policies for reconciling user conflicts, the lack of trail maintenance and erosion control, and unregulated parking.

From an organizational point of view:
• The YCS does not have the time or resources to handle this work;
• The Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park as an organization feels overwhelmed; and,
• The Conservation Commission does not have the time or resources to become involved in the day-to-day management of town lands.

Town-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail Planning
There is no one person or organization at present who has been delegated the authority or received support for planning and developing pedestrian and bicycle connections town-wide. The organization that comes closest to this in terms of their mission is the Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Safety Committee. Yet this group has been tasked primarily with the planning and development of the Beth Condon Memorial Pathway, which is a large and enormously successful project. As the group nears the end of this project, members have begun to question what their future mission should be, and some have expressed an interest in playing a leading role in town-wide pedestrian and bicycle planning. Nonetheless, this issue remains unresolved at present.

Deep Water Access
The number of potential mooring sites at Madeleine Point and the Town Wharf at Little-john Island exceeds the available space for storing dinghies. Thus, the limiting factor to expanding mooring sites at present is not the lack of deep water for keeled vessels, but the lack of shorefront property large enough for the parking and dinghy space needed to access these moorings. In the case of Town Landing, the limiting factor at present is the siltation of the channel in the Royal River. Because of the heavy load of silt carried by the river, which may be due largely to agricultural uses within the watershed, as well as a combination of natural soil conditions and development, mooring sites tend to decline over time even while the demand increases.

Vegetation Management
With the exception of lawn mowing in the village and the maintenance of the turf on athletic fields, the YCS generally lacks the resources to manage vegetation effectively on the lands it maintains. This includes the care of garden and shrub beds, the pruning and maintenance of trees near areas heavily used by the public, the control of invasive species and the mowing of fields on conservation lands. The department compensates to some degree with the use of part-time labor during the summer months, occasional diversion of staff from regular maintenance duties during mild winters, the mowing of fields on conservation lands by volunteers who
supply their own equipment, and the use of conservation corps trail crews. Overall, however, the department's capacity to keep up with this work has not kept pace with the number of new properties that have been acquired or the work created by improvements on existing properties.
Open Space Planning Concepts
Section 5

5.1 The Walkable Community

The differences in policy perspectives that are illustrated in Section 2.1 may be more a matter of emphasis and approaches to implementation strategies, rather than fundamental differences in values or ideology. Throughout the interview process, in fact, the consultant was struck by the degree to which town boards, committees and community groups appeared to share a common vision concerning the quality of life in Yarmouth. Reconciliation of the differences that do exist might, therefore, be facilitated by developing a consensus around a new vision for open space that takes into account all of the gains of the past, but also acknowledges the opportunities and challenges to a fully functioning open space system that still remain.

A New Vision for Open Space

Yarmouth is a walkable community, where streets, sidewalks, trails, architecture and open spaces support travel by foot or bicycle anywhere in the village or the countryside, and in which the design of neighborhoods and streets and their connections to open spaces and commercial areas support healthy social interaction and appreciation for scenic beauty.

Yarmouth’s open spaces are clustered into areas that share similar natural and cultural features. Residents enjoy access to one or more of these eco-recreational regions within easy walking or bicycling distance of their home or business, but each region is unique and offers a different blend of outdoor experiences. Some regions contain highly developed open spaces, such as athletic fields, boat ramps and village parks, that offer opportunities for general active and passive recreation, while others contain relatively undisturbed areas, such as large tracts of forest and riparian land, that offer the opportunity for solitude and the preservation of the natural environment.

5.2 Eco-Recreational Regions

A study of Yarmouth’s open space lands reveals that they occur in clusters that share similar natural and cultural features, as indicated in the proposed new vision for open space in 5.1. Natural features used for classification purposes include topography, vegetation, and hydrography. Cultural features used for classification include the town’s primary use for the properties, nearby or adjacent land uses, and the presence of various historic, community and business attractions that enhance the area. When Yarmouth’s open space lands are viewed in this way, it reveals how each property fits into a larger vision for open space in the community.

The eco-recreational model is a tool for strategic thinking about the role that the town’s open space system plays in community development, including some aspects of economic development. Consequently, it can help the town make decisions dealing with many aspects of land acquisition and management, including when and where to purchase new land or easements, how to manage existing properties, and how to work with area businesses and community groups to improve recreational opportunities for town residents.
In the section that follows, Yarmouth’s open space lands are divided into five eco-recreational regions. The organizing concept for each region is explained based on its salient features, and the principal management issues that remain to be resolved for the cluster as a whole are identified.

**Island Greenway**

**Organizing Concept**
Small waterfront properties offer scenic views and general passive recreation for non-boaters as well as dinghy storage and mooring for boat owners. Although acquired mainly for deep water access, these coastal properties can be linked together for walking, bicycling and picnicking by sidewalks, bike-able roads and trails.

**Properties in System**
- Sandy Point Beach (canoe and kayak launch, general passive recreation)
- Camp Soci (parking, campground, special events, trailhead)
- Tinker Lot (parking, special events, trailhead)
- Cousin’s Island Community House
- Madeleine Point Dinghy Launch and Mooring Site
- Chebeague Island Ferry and Wharf Mooring Site
- Littlejohn Island Town Wharf and Mooring Site

**Trails and Bikeways**
- Camp Soci - Tinker Trail
- Cousins Street Sidewalk
- Island Bikeway (Cousins St, Wharf Rd, Madeleine Pt Rd, Talbot Rd, Little John Rd)

**Other Attractions**
- Cousins Island Cemetery
- Cousins Island Fire barn
- Cousins Island Chapel
- Cunningham Preserve (RRCT)

**Issues**
- Camp Soci reuse plan
- Erosion of bluffs at Sandy Beach (Camp Soci can be used for parking, once erosion, aggravated by rising sea level, eliminates the parking area at Sandy Point Beach)
- Maintaining public access on the Camp Soci - Tinker Trail
- Potential motorist-bicyclist conflicts on the Island Bikeway (by law, motorists must share road with bicyclists)
Possible need for additional parking and dinghy storage space at Madeleine Pt, Town Wharf at Littlejohn Island, and Wharf at Chebeague Island Ferry

Management plans for Sandy Point Beach, Camp Soci and Tinker Lot:

- Parking
- Control of invasives
- Trail uses and type
- Milkweed management vs removal of bittersweet
- Trail erosion, bluff erosion
- Permitted uses

Northeast Forest Corridor

Organizing Concept

A large forested area that consists of nearly contiguous parcels serves multiple functions for the community. Typical uses include passive outdoor recreation, protection of wildlife habitat, preservation of forest scenery, the conservation of riparian land adjacent to the Cousins River estuary, and land for essential municipal functions such as fire training and solid waste management. The properties can be linked together through selected new conservation lands or easements and an integrated trail network.

Properties in System

Pratt's Brook Park
Parks Lot
Transfer Station Property

Other Attractions

Inspiring view of the Cousins River valley from top of the old landfill

Issues

- Trail maintenance at Pratt’s Brook park
- Parking and driveway access at Parks Lot
- Long term management of the landfill at the Transfer Station Property
- Establishing trail connections between properties
- Role of Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park
- Tree management on trails throughout the system (clearing blowdowns, etc)
- Opening and closing gates at parking areas to enforce opening and closing times
- Policy on the use of the properties for off-road bicycling
• Managing user conflicts (such as when hunters and non-hunters use a property at the same time, or when dog walkers and dog droppings leave footprints and excrement on cross-country ski trails)
• Trail grooming for cross-country skiing
• Possible consolidation or reduction in the number of trails at Pratt’s Brook Park
• Possible acquisition of some additional parcels or conservation easements adjacent to existing properties in order to improve connectivity and reduce fragmentation of forest habitat

Royal River Greenway North

Organizing Concept
Permanently protected conservation lands line the shore of the Royal River from East Elm Street to the North Yarmouth town line and beyond. The properties contain a mixture of town-owned parcels, private conservation lands, subdivision open spaces and conservation easements on private land. Unobtrusive but well-maintained forest trails provide public access. Occasional boat ramps provide water access for canoeing and kayaking. The Greenway protects water quality in the Royal River, wildlife habitat, scenic quality and passive outdoor recreation.

Properties in System
Sweetsir Lot
Barker Lot
Sligo Road Lot

Other Attractions
North Yarmouth Academy may build baseball and/or softball fields at the Sligo Road property
Small boat ramp at Water District Property on East Elm Street

Issues
• Joint use agreement between town and North Yarmouth Academy (NYA may still want to build some athletic fields at the site)
• Determining the width of a naturally forested riparian border for the Greenway (minimum widths will vary depending on criteria used), for example:

1. Water quality – 100’
2. Scenic quality – 200’
3. Unimproved forest trails – 100-300’ (depends on topography)
4. Belted kingfisher roosting sites – 200’
5. Otter, mink, and beaver feeding and denning sites – 300’
6. General habitat for area-sensitive interior forest bird species – 300’
7. Bald eagle nesting sites and heron rookeries – 600’

- If the size of a parcel is greater than the area needed for the Greenway, there may be opportunities for limited development
- Willingness of the town to practice limited development techniques on Greenway parcels
- Willingness of the town to grant conservation easements on land within the Greenway
- Funding strategies for acquiring additional land or easements within the Greenway
- Land use ordinances that create incentives or require open space in new subdivisions adjacent to the river

**Royal River Greenway South**

**Organizing Concept**

Strategically located town properties provide public access to the tidal portion of the Royal River for outdoor recreation and the conservation of scenic quality and wildlife habitat. Typical activities include boat launching, mooring, hiking, picnicking, nature observation, fishing, clamming and photography.

**Properties in System**

- Town Landing
- Bayview Estuary Preserve
- Larrabee’s Landing
- Fels-Groves Farm Preserve
- Treatment Plant Property
- Trail easements in two subdivisions

**Trails and Bikeways**

- Bayview Street Bikeway
- Bayview trail system
- Fels-Groves trail system
- Royal River Estuary Trail (proposed route: Yarmouth Harbor to Larrabee Landing)
- Island Bikeway (Cousins St.)

**Other Attractions**

Private facilities at Yarmouth Harbor include mooring sites, docks, various yacht services, restaurants, bookstores, and sales of marine equipment
- Riverside Cemetery
- Holy Cross Cemetery


**Issues**

- Maintaining adequate channel depth in river
- Demand for mooring sites exceeds supply
- Water quality not yet suitable for shellfishing
- Developing and maintaining proper foot trails within trail easements
- Acquiring permission for public access where gaps occur in the proposed Estuary Trail
- Management policies for Bayview and Fels-Groves:
  - Trail design and maintenance
  - Control of invasive species
  - Field management at Fels-Groves (habitat for ground nesting songbirds)
  - Location and design of parking areas

**The Village**

**Organizing Concept**

The area within a radius of about one mile from Royal River Park, but not including Route One or Yarmouth Harbor, that contains most of Yarmouth’s historic village and higher density residential and mixed-use neighborhoods. Homes, businesses, churches, schools, parks and playgrounds are linked together by sidewalks and tree-lined streets. In this setting, the design of streets, landscaping and architecture foster social interaction, neighborhood cohesion, small businesses and a sense of place.

**Properties in System**

- Harrison Middle School
- Yarmouth Elementary School
- Superintendent’s Building
- Yarmouth High School
- Yarmouth Athletic Complex
- West Main Street Schools and Playground
- Old Meetinghouse Hillside St.
- Latchstring Park
- Village Green
- Royal River Park
- Rowe School
- Merrill Memorial Library
- Memorial Green
- Town Hall
Orland Blake Skating Pond and V.I.S. Warming Hut
Grist Mill Park
Sparhawk Mill River Access (unimproved)
Gendall Park East Main St.
Community House East Main St.
Center St. Fire barn
North Rd Fire barn
Little League Fields
North Road Playground

**Trails and Bikeways**

Royal River Park Pathway
Beth Condon Memorial Pathway
Portland Street Walkway
Cleaves Street Trail (unimproved)
Forest Falls Drive – Park St. Trail (private property, not maintained)

**Other Attractions**

Baptist Cemetery
Churches (4)
North Yarmouth Academy
The Lodge
Main Street stores and offices
Yarmouth Historical Society museum, offices and gift shop

**Issues**

- Maintaining connectivity of small local streets and sidewalks as new neighborhoods are built
- Requiring new subdivisions to provide sidewalks and tree lawns
- Adding sidewalks and tree lawns in some existing neighborhoods where they are needed
- Completing the trail connection between Royal River Park and Grist Mill Park
- Possible use of town land at Royal River Park for the new Historical Society building
- Pruning, limbing and removing dead and dying trees on park and school grounds
- Cost and effort of maintaining flower and shrub beds on town properties throughout the village
- Dog walking policy at Royal River Park and enforcement of Pooper Scooper Ordinance
• Coordination of small accessory structures used by booster clubs and/or community services on school grounds

• Status of Forest Falls Drive and Cleaves Street trails

• Effect of traffic on Main Street (Route 115) as suburbs expand in the region
6.1 Principles of Reorganization

Organize committees around major functions and areas of expertise.
Acquiring and managing town land involves a number of closely related skills, interests and areas of expertise that could theoretically be handled by single committee. However, a closer inspection of the day-to-day business of managing town land reveals that there are two major areas of work, requiring a certain degree of specialization. One involves the management of school grounds and athletic facilities, and the other is the management of town parks, conservation lands, and shorefront properties. In terms of functional efficiency, it may be wise to recognize these differences by separating these two groups of activities organizationally. The result would be two standing committees that deal with the management of town lands.

Use subcommittees to handle most of the work of standing committees.
Subcommittees are effective because they consist of small working groups of people that are very focused on their mission and easy to coordinate. They can also be formed and disbanded as needed, depending on the specific tasks to be accomplished. This will help to diminish the proliferation of new committees that occurs as new interests and projects arise.

Subcommittees are usually led by a member of the oversight committee, but the members can be recruited from the general population in order to obtain the benefit of the specific skills and interests that different kinds of people have to offer. The findings and recommendations of subcommittees should be reviewed by the oversight committee before they are brought before the Town Council for resolution, in order to ensure accountability.

Encourage committees to report directly to the Town Council.
Committees handle most of the work of policy development in town government. As such, they should have a good working relationship with elected officials. This relationship is often best fostered when committees report periodically on their progress to the Town Council.

If a committee’s work involves a politically sensitive task or a substantive policy question, it should seek guidance on the policy before undertaking extensive meetings or research on the subject. This can often be done at a Council workshop, where an informal dialogue on the question at hand can be conducted. Interactive communication of this kind between committee members and Town Councillors is likely to produce better policies than attempts to maintain communication through liaisons.

Provide regular staff support for committees.
Staff help committees become more effective by increasing the amount of work they can do, by improving continuity and consistency in implementing town policy, and by helping to coordinate tasks with other committees, the public and town government.

Subcommittees do not always require direct staff support in order to accomplish their mission. In those instances where staff support is critical, it can be provided in a variety of ways,
depending on the skills needed and the duration of the project. Options include assistance from the staff person working for the oversight committee, an existing town employee working in another department, a temporary employee hired for the duration of the project, or a consultant.

**Provide regular funding for the work of committees.**
Funding for the work of committees and their subcommittees should be provided through the annual budgeting process. Committees should develop a program of tasks proposed for the upcoming year and request a budget appropriation to match this need. Most expenditures are likely to be made by subcommittees. The oversight committee should approve these expenses before a subcommittee undertakes its work.

Most of the committees involved in the management of town lands need to perform research and prepare maps based on GIS, at least periodically. Currently, the town engineer provides this support using funds budgeted for updating information about sewer and water lines. This level of assistance is inadequate, however, and the town should take steps to provide regular funding for additional GIS data layers, analysis and map preparation by these committees.

**Keep current committees functioning while the new ones organize.**
Prospective committees should convene in order to fully develop their mission statements and operating principles before undertaking their first projects. The members can often be recruited from existing committees in order to provide continuity, experience and expertise. In addition, personnel needed for staff support should be hired before the new committees meet for the first time. A gradual approach in this manner will help to provide order and reduce uncertainty during the transition period.

**6.2 Proposed Disposition of Current Committees**

**YCS Advisory**
Discontinue the YCSAC and divide its functions between two new committees: the Parks and Lands Committee and School Grounds and Athletic Facilities Committee. Incorporate adult education and youth recreation programming functions into the School Grounds and Athletic Facilities Committee.

**Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park**
De-charter the Friends and incorporate them into a new volunteer Land Stewardship Program, led by the newly hired conservation planner. The program is described in Section 8.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathway Safety**
Incorporate this group as a subcommittee of the Parks and Lands Committee. Achieving connectivity between town lands or between neighborhoods and other open spaces is an important aspect of improving opportunities for outdoor recreation town-wide.

**Harbor and Waterfront**
Keep this committee’s focus on its primary mission, which is to monitor docks, moorings and boating safety in marine waters. The lead role in planning shorefront properties should be transferred to the Parks and Lands Committee.
Conservation Commission
De-charter the Conservation Commission and roll its functions into the new Parks and Lands Committee.

6.3 New Committee Structure and Function

Parks and Lands

Area of Responsibility
All of the town’s landscaped areas, green spaces, gardens, parks, shorefront properties, conservation lands, large undeveloped parcels, trails, bike paths, sidewalks and various kinds of rights-of-ways and access agreements that are needed to implement the town’s open space vision of eco-recreational regions and a walkable community.

Mission
To advise the Town Council, Town Departments and the public concerning the planning, acquisition, management and disposition of town lands needed to implement the open space vision.

Tasks
- Improve public access and use of town lands within the context of the role that each property plays in its eco-recreational region through better management, public education and advocacy
- Assist in resolving conflicts that may arise from the public’s use of towns lands
- Research and plan rights-of-ways, sidewalks, bike paths, trails and public access agreements needed to link town properties, neighborhoods and schools town-wide
- Research and plan the acquisition of properties and easements needed to enhance the recreational and ecological functioning of town lands and open spaces
- Provide comments to the Planning Board concerning the public benefit aspects of open space in new subdivisions
- Provide education and advocacy for policies and programs needed to implement the tasks described above

Staff Support
Provided by YCS through the Conservation Planner

School Grounds and Athletic Facilities

Area of Responsibility
All of the landscaped areas used as grounds around school buildings, playgrounds associated with the schools, athletic fields, the Yarmouth Athletic Complex, and any buildings or accessory structures (such as fencing, lighting, bathrooms, concession stands, etc.) that are needed for the management of school grounds or to provide services to the public during use of school grounds and athletic facilities.
Mission
To advise the Town Council, Town Departments and the public concerning the planning, acquisition, management and disposition of town lands needed by the schools and the town’s athletic programs.

Tasks
• Evaluate the maintenance needs of current facilities and advise YCS concerning the day-to-day management of school grounds and athletic fields
• Coordinate the use of school grounds and athletic fields in the event of user conflicts and changes in recreational activity
• Plan the development of new school grounds and athletic facilities to meet changing needs
• Assist in planning adult education and youth recreation programs and coordinating their use of town facilities
• Develop programs for the equitable distribution of costs and efficient funding of school grounds and athletic facilities
• Provide education and advocacy for the programs and policies needed to implement the tasks described above.

Staff Support
Provided by YCS through the YCS Director

Harbor and Waterfront (existing committee)

Area of Responsibility
Tidal waters and submerged lands off the coast of Yarmouth.

Mission
To advise the Town Council, Town Departments, and the public concerning the regulation and management of maritime activity within Yarmouth’s tidal waters and submerged lands.

Tasks
• Regulation and management of docks, moorings and channel depth needed to support the public’s access to the marine environment for recreation, fishing and shellfish harvesting
• Regulation and management of boating safety and rescue services within the town’s coastal zone
• Provide information and guidance to the Parks and Lands Committee during the planning and development of waterfront sites

Staff Support
Provided by the Police Department through the Harbormaster
Committee Reorganization Plan
For Improving the Management of Town Lands

- Formal authority, represented by the solid lines, proceeds from top to bottom and from left to right
- Staff support, represented by the dashed lines, shows the connection between Departments and the Advisory Committees
- Committees advise the Town Council directly, strengthening the collaborative nature of town government
- Departmental staff provide professional advice, institutional memory, and research for the Advisory Committees, in addition to administering programs and delivering services to the public

Figure 5
7.1 Town Government Decision-making

Encourage Collaboration

Formal organizational charts of town government seldom give a complete picture of how decisions are actually made. Figures 6 and 7 provide two alternative views of how local governments often work in practice. In Figure 6, decisions are made as a result of a collaborative process involving the town council, committees, town departments and the public. A key feature of this organizational type is the strong interaction that occurs between the town council and town committees. A strong relationship of this kind is more likely to develop when committee members understand that their primary role is to support the work of their elected officials. Encouraging committees to report directly to the town council naturally follows.

Organic Model

Collaborative Decision-Making

- Strong relationship between Town Council and Committees
- Many feedback loops
- Committee policy development role is strong

Figure 6
Avoid Linear Decision-making

In many towns, where leadership from both the elected officials and their appointed committees is weak, a type of decision-making evolves where town departments take most of the initiative for policy development. The town council continues to make the final decisions, and committees provide a useful role in discussing staff recommendations, but overall there tends to be little interaction between the town councilors and their appointed officials on committees regarding policy matters. Figure 7 illustrates a linear decision-making process of this kind.

Such a central role for town staff can be stressful and fraught with political peril. One common consequence is a growing resentment of town staff within the community, sometimes shared not only by the public, but also by town committees and even the town council. Not uncommonly, elected and appointed officials sometimes dissociate themselves from officially approved town policies and may even obstruct their implementation.

Chain Reaction Model

Linear Decision-Making

- Public exerts pressure on all visible entities of government equally
- Town staff take center stage
- Committee policy role is weak

Figure 7
Emulate the General Organization Plan

Figure 8 illustrates how the collaborative decision-making model shown in Figure 6 would appear when constructed as a formal organizational diagram. Although key feedback loops are not represented, the diagram does accurately portray the importance of the relationship between the Town Council and the Advisory Committees, as well as the vital role of Town Departments in supporting the work of the Advisory Committees. The proposed Committee Reorganization Plan illustrated in Figure 5 at the end of Section 6 is based upon this organizational concept.

General Organization Plan

Healthy Town Government

- Formal authority, represented by the solid lines, proceeds from top to bottom
- Informal daily communication, represented by the dashed lines, moves two ways in all directions
- Committees advise the Town Council directly, strengthening the collaborative nature of town government
- Departmental staff provide professional advice, institutional memory, and research for the Advisory Committees, in addition to administering programs and delivering services to the public

Figure 8
Maintain Continuity of Policy through Annual Meetings

Coordination of Town committees working on land management and acquisition issues can be fostered through an annual meeting or conference. The conference can include updates of the progress of each committee and their proposed work for the next year. Of prime importance, however, is an honest evaluation of the progress that the Town has made overall in the past year concerning the management of town lands and the implementation of the Town’s open space plan. Such a periodic re-evaluation lays the strongest foundation for the next year’s work plans and budget requests by each of the committees involved.

The annual conference will be more effective if it includes the Town’s conservation and land management partners, such as the Royal River Conservation Trust, the Friends of Pratt’s Brook Park, and other community groups with an interest in the future of open space and outdoor recreation in Yarmouth. The goal is to bridge the divide between groups and organizations that share a common interest and create momentum toward a united policy and the sharing of resources.

The idea of annual conferences can be adapted in a variety of ways to suit the needs of individual communities and changing circumstances. In some cases, the annual conference might be preceded by a meeting of town committees only, or perhaps a combination of town committees and community groups as needed, in order to work out policy direction and coordination of effort on specific projects. What is important is to develop the habit of collaboration and working in unity with other community groups in order to achieve common goals.
Strengthening Departmental Resources
Section 8

8.1 Other Tasks Needed to Support Reorganization

Hire a Conservation Planner

The conservation planner supplements the administrative capabilities of YCS by specializing in the management of large undeveloped parcels, conservation lands and the outdoor recreation that takes place on these lands. The individual should have excellent written and oral communication skills as well as the ability to work with volunteers, private and public landowners, committees and the general public. An academic background in one of the environmental sciences, environmental policy, forestry, agriculture, soil science, wildlife biology, or landscape architecture is useful and beneficial.

The conservation planner provides staff support for the Parks and Lands Committee and the Conservation Commission, administers the Land Stewardship Program, organizes clinics for training volunteers, researches funding opportunities for land acquisition and trail development, leads educational workshops on natural resource issues, conducts research, writes reports, and oversees contractual services needed to manage town properties. The work may involve planning and overseeing GIS data collection, surveying, forestry, design of informational brochures, trail building, and construction of small structures, parking lots and other improvements on town property.

The conservation planner reports to the YCS Director. The position is part time and may be shared with other communities or non-profit conservation groups.

Develop a Land Stewardship Program

The Land Stewardship Program provides community groups and individuals an opportunity to support the funding, management and acquisition of town properties through volunteer work. The program is administered by YCS through the Conservation Planner, and allows people to choose what property and type of work they wish to do, for as long as they wish to contribute, while being assisted by YCS with training and equipment, if necessary.

Individuals and community groups participate by adopting a park, an area within a park (like a parking lot or garden), a trail or a single project for maintenance or advocacy purposes. There can be many land stewards for each property. For example, for any given property, some individuals might elect to do only trail work, whereas others might elect to provide only education and advocacy. In either case, the Conservation Planner is responsible for making sure that the work is coordinated for the benefit of both the land and the volunteers.

The program seeks to recognize the contributions of volunteers while also requiring that all work done on behalf of the town meets certain standards for quality and design. The standards are established by YCS in consultation with the Parks and Lands Committee, and are intended to ensure public safety, visual attractiveness and longevity of park improvements.
**Provide Additional GIS Support**

Most of the committees involved in the management of town lands need to perform research and prepare maps based on GIS. This will be particularly true for the Parks and Lands Committee. Although the Planning Office provides some support in this area, most of the GIS work done currently for land management purposes is performed by the Town Engineer. The work is funded from a line item dedicated to updating information about sewer and water lines. This level of assistance is inadequate, however, and the town should take steps to provide town committees with additional GIS data layers, analysis and map preparation. The program could be administered by the Conservation Planner or perhaps by the Planning Office.
Appendix 1

Cost Tables

Contents
• Cost / Work Unit
• Cost / Acre
• Labor Cost / Total Cost
## Cost Tables

### Cost / Work Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Work Units</th>
<th>Cost / Unit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yarmouth</td>
<td>231,750</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>1,332</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>93,107</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1,001</td>
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<td>Falmouth</td>
<td>187,942</td>
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<td>South Portland</td>
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Average = $2,317

### Cost / Acre

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<th>Cost / Acre</th>
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Average = $1,531

### Labor Cost / Total Cost

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<th>% Labor</th>
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<td>South Portland</td>
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<td>925,242</td>
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</table>

Average = 61
Appendix 2

Park Division Calculations
Cost / Work Unit

Contents
• Yarmouth
• Cumberland
• Falmouth
• Scarborough
• South Portland
### Yarmouth Parks Division
#### Cost / Work Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Work Units Each</th>
<th>Work Units Subtotal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Running Fields</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Tennis Courts (lighted)</td>
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<td>Outdoor Skating Rinks</td>
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### Calculation of Cost Per Work Unit

**A. Parks Division Budget 2006-07:** $231,750

**Note**
- *Excludes $15,975 in cost of administration (portion of the Community Services Director’s salary attributed to the Parks Division).*

**B. Annual Budget /Total Work Units = Cost/Work Unit**

**C. $231,750/174 = $1,332**
## Calculation of Work Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Work Units Each</th>
<th>Work Units Subtotal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields</td>
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<td>Practice Fields</td>
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<td>Outdoor Skating Rinks</td>
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<td>Grounds Around Municipal Buildings</td>
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</table>

## Calculation of Cost Per Work Unit

A. Parks Division Budget 2006-07: $93,107
B. Annual Budget /Total Work Units = Cost/Work Unit
C. $93,107/93 = $1001
## Falmouth Parks Division

### Cost / Work Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Work Units Each</th>
<th>Work Units Subtotal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Running Fields</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Tennis Courts (lighted)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Tennis Courts (unlighted)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Basketball Courts (nets)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Skating Rinks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grounds Around Municipal Buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village Parks (ac.)</td>
<td>11.9</td>
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<td>Traffic Islands and Cul-de-sacs (ac.)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cemeteries (ac.)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Fields (ac.)</td>
<td>30.0</td>
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<td>15.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multipurpose Trails (mi.)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 119.8

### Calculation of Cost Per Work Unit

A. Parks Division Budget 2006-07: $187,942

**Note**

- Excludes the cost of employee benefits, director’s salary and money set aside for capital improvements and reserve accounts

B. Annual Budget /Total Work Units = Cost/Work Unit

C. $187,942/120 = $1,566
## Calculation of Total Work Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Work Units Each</th>
<th>Work Units Subtotal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artificial Turf Fields</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multipurpose Running Fields</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Fields</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Rubber Tracks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Tennis Courts (lighted)</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Skating Rinks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming Beaches (ac.)</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grounds Around School Buildings</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grounds Around Municipal Buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boat Ramps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multipurpose Trails (mi.)</td>
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## Calculation of Cost Per Work Unit

A. Grounds and Ice Rink Maintenance Budget 2006-07: $372,285

*Note*
- Cost of employee benefits has been excluded from the budget and the cost of the new park manager position from the budget year 2007-08 has been added

B. Annual Budget /Total Work Units = Cost/Work Unit

C. $372,285/207 = $1,798
## Yarmouth Land Stewardship Plan

### South Portland Parks Division

**Cost / Work Unit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Work Units Each</th>
<th>Work Units Subtotal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/Softball Fields</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Running Game Fields</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multipurpose Running Fields</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Practice Fields</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rubber Tracks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Basketball Courts (nets)</td>
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<td>Tennis Courts</td>
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<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Skating Rinks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Country Ski Trails (mi.)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenways</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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<td>Swimming Beaches w/ Life Guards (ac.)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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## Calculation of Cost Per Work Unit

A. Parks Division Budget 2006-07: $925,242

**Note**

- Excludes $17,660 in contributions to cemetery maintenance, $4,583 in veterans flags, and $38,700 in tree service

B. Annual Budget /Total Work Units = Cost/Work Unit

C. $925,242/473 = $1,956
Appendix 3

Park Division Facilities

Contents

• Yarmouth
• Cumberland
• Falmouth
• Scarborough
• South Portland
Park Division Facilities

Yarmouth

Baseball and Softball Fields: 7
Bennett Field at Rowe School (baseball): 1
Michael Brown Field (softball) and Baseball Field at YHS: 2
Winslow Softball Field: 1
North Road Little League Fields (softball 1, baseball 2): 3

Running Fields: 4
Field Hockey Field at YHS: (1)
Winslow Recreational Fields: (3)

Artificial Turf Fields: 1
Yarmouth Athletic Complex: 1

Rubber Track: 1
Yarmouth Athletic Complex: 1

Outdoor Tennis Courts: 8
Donna Hall Memorial Tennis Courts: 4 (with lights)
Rowe School Tennis Courts: 2
Yarmouth Elementary School Tennis Courts: 2

Outdoor Basketball Courts (nets): 6
Yarmouth Elementary School: 4
Harrison Middle School: 2

Playgrounds: 5
Rowe School
Yarmouth Elementary School
Harrison Middle School
Applewoods Subdivision
North Road

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 1
Orland Blake Skating Pond and VIS Warming Hut: 1

Grounds Around School Buildings: 5
Yarmouth Elementary School
Harrison Middle School
Yarmouth High School
Rowe School
Superintendent's Building
Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 5
Town Hall
Merrill Memorial Library
West Main Street Schools
East Main Street Community House
North Road Fire Station

Cross Country Ski Trails (Miles of Improved Surface): 6
Pratt's Brook Park: 6

Village Parks (acres): 27.26
Old Meetinghouse Hillside Street: 1.30
Latchstring Park: 0.40
Village Green: 0.61
Royal River Park: 10.0
Memorial Green: 1.30
Grist Mill Park Overlook: 0.53
Gendall Park: 0.77
Town Landing: 5.0
Cousin's Island Community House: 0.22
Larrabee's Landing: 0.63
Camp Soci: 5.0
Pleasant Street Stagecoach Station: 0.25
Brick School Island at Sligo Road: 0.25
Newell Road: 0.25
Route One Ramps at Main Street and East Main Street: 0.25
Beth Condon Memorial Pathway at Portland Street: 0.25
Melissa Drive: 0.25

Farm Fields (acres): 38.5
Tinker Property: 4.0
Pratt's Brook Park: 4.0
Bayview Estuary: 3.0
Parks Property: 2.5
Fels-Groves: 25.0

Cumberland

Baseball and Softball Fields: 5
Town Forest Little League Baseball Fields: 2
Twin Brook Baseball Field and Softball Field: 2
West Cumberland Little League Field: 1

Running Fields: 4
Twin Brook Recreation Area: 4

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 1
Behind Public Works Building on Drowne Road: 1
Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 2
Town Hall
Prince Memorial Library

Cross Country Ski Trails (Miles of Improved Surface): 3
Twin Brook Recreation Area: 3

Farm Fields (acres): 60.0
Twin Brook Recreation Area: 60.0

Falmouth

Baseball and Softball Fields: 6
Community Park Baseball Field: 1
Huston Park Little League Field: 1
Legion Fields (Little League 3, Baseball 1): 4

Running Fields: 6
Community Park Fields: 5
P.W.D. Field (adjacent to Community Park): 1

Outdoor Tennis Courts (lighted): 4
Huston Park: 2
Legion Fields: 2
High School: 3

Outdoor Tennis Courts (unlighted): 2
High School: 2

Outdoor Basketball Courts (nets): 4
Huston Park: 4

Playgrounds: 4
Graves School Park
Huston Park
Legion Fields
Underwood Park

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 2
Huston Park: 1
Village Park: 1

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 3
Town Hall
Huston Park Fire Station
Pleasant Hill Fire Station
Multipurpose Trails (Miles of Improved Surface): 3.1
Community Park: 3.0
Walton Park: 0.1

Village Parks (acres): 11.9
Depot Park: 0.5
Engine 2 Park: 0.2
Graves School Park: 0.7
Heater Piece, Middle Road: 0.4
Phillips Road Park: 0.2
Town Landing: 0.1
Town Landing Parking Lot: 0.3
Underwood Park: 1.7
Village Park: 6.3
Walton Park: 1.5

Traffic Islands and Cul-de-sacs (acres): 3.6
Route One and Foreside Road: 2.0
Field Road and Woodville Road: 0.1
Juniper Lane: 0.1
Fundy Road: 0.1
Providence Avenue North: 1.0
Providence Avenue South: 0.3

Cemeteries (acres): 1.7
Falmouth Road (McGregor & Marston): 0.2
Falmouth Community Park: 0.1
Brook Road (Packard): 0.1
Foreside Road (Community Church): 0.8
Pleasant Hill Road (Pleasant Hill): 0.1
Pineview Road (Leighton): 0.1
Woodville Road (Merrill & Winslow): 0.3

Farm Fields: 30.0
Community Park: 30.0

Scarborough

Baseball and Softball Fields: 14
High School Baseball Field (1) and Softball Fields (2): 3
Middle School Little League Field and Softball Field: 2
Blue Point School Little League Field: 1
Dunstan Corner Baseball Field: 1
Highland Avenue Little League Field: 1
Jennie and Isaac E, Wiley Recreation Area Baseball and Little League Fields: 2
Peterson Field Complex Softball Field and Little League Field: 2
Springbrook Park Softball Fields: 2
Artificial Turf Fields: 1
High School: 1

Multipurpose Running Fields: 5
Jennie and Isaac E. Wiley Recreation Area: 1
Memorial Park: 2
Peterson Field Complex: 1
Springbrook Park: 1

Practice Fields: 7
High School: 3
Middle School: 1
Wentworth Intermediate School: 1
Blue Point School: 1
Eight Corners School: 1

Rubber Track: 1
High School Athletic Complex: 1

Outdoor Tennis Courts: 8
High School/Middle School Tennis Courts: 4 (with lights)

Outdoor Basketball Courts (nets): 10
High School/Middle School: 10

Playgrounds: 6
Wentworth Intermediate School: 1
Blue Point School: 1
Eight Corners School: 1
Pleasant Hill Primary School: 1
Jennie and Isaac E. Wiley Recreation Area: 1
Peterson Field Complex: 1

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 1
Memorial Park: 1

Grounds Around School Buildings: 8
High School
Middle School
Wentworth Intermediate School
Superintendent's Building
Blue Point School
Eight Corners School
Pleasant Hill Primary School
Superintendent's Building

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 9
Town Hall
Library
Public Safety
Fire Stations (6)

**Multipurpose Trails (Miles of Improved Surface): 1.5**
Scarborough River Wildlife Sanctuary: 1.5

**Boat Ramps:** 1
Ferry Beach: 1

**Swimming Beaches:** 6.0
Hurd Park: 3.0
Ferry Beach: 3.0

**South Portland**

**Baseball and Softball Fields:** 22
Wainright Recreation Complex Baseball (2) and Softball (4): 6
South Portland High School Baseball (1) and Softball (2): 3
Memorial Middle School Baseball: 1
Mahoney Middle School Baseball (1) and Softball (1): 2
Kaler Elementary School Softball: 1
Spring Point Shoreway Baseball (1) and Softball (1): 2
Wilkinson Park Little League Fields: 2
Pine Street Little League Fields: 2
Peary Terrace Little League Fields: 3

**Running Game Fields:** 1
South Portland High School: 1

**Multipurpose Running Fields:** 12
Wainright Recreation Complex: 8
South Portland High School: 2
Memorial Middle School: 1
Mahoney Middle School: 1

**Practice Fields:** 14
South Portland High School: 1
Memorial Middle School: 2
Mahoney Middle School: 1
Brown Elementary School: 1
Small Elementary School: 1
Kaler Elementary School: 2
Skillen Elementary School: 2
Dyer Elementary School: 2
Spring Point Shoreway: 2

**Rubber Tracks:** 1
South Portland High School: 1
Outdoor Basketball Courts (nets): 8
   High/Sawyer Park: 2
   Legere Park: 4
   Willard Park: 2

Playgrounds: 13
   Brown Elementary School: 1
   Dyer Elementary School: 1
   Kaler Elementary School: 1
   Small Elementary School: 1
   Skillen Elementary School: 2
   Legere Park: 1
   Willard Park: 1
   Wilkinson Park: 1
   School Street Park: 1
   Spring Point Shoreway: 3

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 1
   Mill Creek Park: 1

Tennis Courts: 15
   South Portland High School: 7
   Memorial Middle School: 3
   Mahoney Middle School: 3
   Small Elementary School: 2

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 8
   Library
   Town Hall
   Municipal Complex
   Fire Stations (5)

Grounds Around School Buildings: 11
   South Portland High School: 3
   Memorial Middle School: 2
   Mahoney Middle School: 1
   Small Elementary School: 1
   Kaler Elementary School: 1
   Skillen Elementary School: 1
   Dyer Elementary School: 1
   Brown Elementary School: 1

Village Parks (acres): 37.65
   Anthoine Creek Park: 0.5
   Bug Light Park: 8.75
   Cash Corner Park: 0.21
   Fisherman's Point: 0.21
   “GE” Erskine Park: 0.5
   High/Sawyer Park: 0.12
   High School Park: 1.0
Hinckley Park: 5.0
Legere Park: 0.83
Mill Creek Park: 10.0
School Street Park: 0.44
Spring Point Shoreway: 16.7
Thomas Knight Park: 1.5
Willard Park: 0.64

Cross Country Ski Trails (Miles of Improved Surface): 2
Hinckley Park: 2

Golf Course (acres): 34.5
South Portland Municipal Golf Course

Farm Fields (acres): 84.0
Wainright Farm Recreation Area: 84.0

Boat Ramps: 1
Bug Light Park: 1

Swimming Beaches with Life Guards: 1
Willard Beach: 4.0 acres

Greenways (miles): 5.9
Clarks Pond: .2
The Greenbelt: 5.7
Appendix 4

Park Division Actively Manged Land

Contents

• Yarmouth
• Cumberland
• Falmouth
• Scarborough
• South Portland
Park Division Actively Managed Land

Yarmouth

School Properties: 44.2
Harrison Middle School: 13.1
Yarmouth Elementary School: 2.0
Yarmouth High School: 23.0
Portland Street Access Road (High School): 1.1
Rowe School: 5.0

Playgrounds: 0.4
Applewoods Playground: 0.4

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 1.6
Orland Blake Skating Pond and VIS Warming Hut: 1.6

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 8.1
Town Hall: 0.25
Merrill Memorial Library: 1.3
West Main Street Schools: 0.5
East Main Street Community House: .1
North Road Fire Station and Little League Fields: 6.0

Village Parks (acres): 27.26
Old Meetinghouse Hillside Street: 1.30
Latchstring Park: 0.40
Village Green: 0.61
Royal River Park: 10.0
Memorial Green: 1.30
Grist Mill Park Overlook: 0.53
Gendall Park: 0.77
Town Landing: 5.0
Cousin’s Island Community House: 0.22
Larrabee’s Landing: 0.63
Camp Soci: 5.0
Pleasant Street Stagecoach Station: 0.25
Brick School Island at Sligo Road: 0.25
Newell Road: 0.25
Route One Ramps at Main Street and East Main Street: 0.25
Beth Condon Memorial Pathway at Portland Street: 0.25
Melissa Drive: 0.25

Farm Fields (acres): 38.5
Tinker Property: 4.0
Pratt’s Brook Park: 4.0
Bayview Estuary: 3.0
Parks Property: 2.5
Fels-Groves: 25.0
Total: 120.1

Cumberland

Town Forest: 3.0
Little League Baseball Fields: 3.0

West Cumberland: 2.4
Little League Field and Play Area: 2.4

Twin Brook Recreation Area: 81.0
Tuttle Road: 61.0
Greely Road: 20.0

Outdoor Skating Rinks: 0.8
Behind Public Works Building on Drowne Road: 0.8

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 3.4
Town Hall: 0.7
Prince Memorial Library: 1.7
Cumberland Commons: 1.0

Total: 90.6

Falmouth

Community Park: 50.0
Athletic Fields: 20
Hay Fields: 30

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 0.5
Town Hall: 0.25
Pleasant Hill Fire Station: 0.25

Village Parks (acres): 28.7
Depot Park: 0.5
Engine 2 Park: 0.2
Graves School Park: 0.7
Heater Piece, Middle Road: 0.4
Huston Park: 4.8
Legion Fields: 12.0
Phillips Road Park: 0.2
Town Landing: 0.1
Town Landing Parking Lot: 0.3
Underwood Park: 1.7
Village Park: 6.3
Walton Park: 1.5
Traffic Islands and Cul-de-sacs (acres): 3.6
Route One and Foreside Road: 2.0
Field Road and Woodville Road: 0.1
Juniper Lane: 0.1
Fundy Road: 0.1
Providence Avenue North: 1.0
Providence Avenue South: 0.3

Cemeteries (acres): 1.7
Falmouth Road (McGregor & Marston): 0.2
Falmouth Community Park: 0.1
Brook Road (Packard): 0.1
Foreside Road (Community Church): 0.8
Pleasant Hill Road (Pleasant Hill): 0.1
Pineview Road (Leighton): 0.31
Woodville Road (Merrill & Winslow): 0.3

Farm Fields: 30.0
Community Park: 30.0

Total: 114.5

Scarborough

School Properties: 40.4
Oak Hill Campus: 32.0
Pleasant Hill Primary: 2.0
Blue Point School: 2.6
Eight Corners School: 3.8

Town Parks: 52.7
Memorial Park: 23.0
Wiley Recreation Area: 8.9
Peterson Field Complex: 7.8
Springbook Park: 7.0
Hurd Park: 3.0
Ferry Beach: 3.0

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 5.5
Town Hall: 1.3
Library: 2.4
Public Safety: 0.25
Fire Stations: 1.5

Total: 98.6
South Portland

School Properties: 66.1
South Portland High School: 28.0
Memorial Middle School and Skillen Elementary School: 16.6
Mahoney Middle School and Brown Elementary School: 11.5
Small Elementary School: 3.9
Kaler Elementary School: 3.4
Dyer Elementary School: 2.7

Village Parks: 55.7
Anthoine Creek Park: 0.5
Bug Light Park: 8.75
Cash Corner Park: 0.21
Fisherman's Point: 0.21
“GE” Erskine Park: 0.5
High/Sawyer Park: 0.12
High School Park: 1.0
Hinckley Park: 5.0
Legere Park: 0.83
Mill Creek Park: 10.0
School Street Park: 0.44
Spring Point Shoreway: 21.0
Thomas Knight Park: 1.5
Willard Park: 0.64
Wilkinson Park: 5.0

Golf Courses: 34.5
South Portland Municipal Golf Course

Recreation Complexes (acres): 120.0
Wainright Farm Recreation Area: 120.0

Miscellaneous Areas: 8.0
Pine Street Little League Fields: 3.7
Peary Terrace Little League Fields: 4.3

Grounds Around Municipal Buildings: 1.75
Library: (included in acreage of Brown Elementary School)
Town Hall: 0.25
Municipal Complex: 0.25
Fire Stations (5): 1.25

Total: 286.1