

# SECTION 8

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals and Objectives were formulated from the results of the ADA Self-Evaluation conducted in August of 2006 and the Whately Open Space and Recreation Planning Survey, which was conducted in April of 2006. Surveys were distributed to all 650 households in town. Of these, 94 were returned and counted as responses, which represents a response rate of approximately 14 percent. Although the responses may not reflect the opinions of all residents, they do represent an important source of community input. The results of the survey were used as a foundation for further discussion regarding the open space and recreation resources most important to Whately residents.

**Goal A: To preserve and enhance the special rural and agricultural landscape which makes the Town of Whately unique – the farms of East Whately; the ridges and forests of West Whately; the town’s scenic roadways, historic landscapes and historic buildings and sites; and the town’s village centers.**

### **Objectives:**

- A1. Appoint a standing Open Space Advisory Committee.
- A2. Prioritize areas in Whately that contain significant natural, agricultural, and cultural resources and/or opportunities for recreation so that town officials and residents can act in a timely manner to protect these areas when parcels of land are offered for sale, offered for donation to the town, or come out of the Chapter 61 program.
- A3. Encourage landowners interested in protecting their land from development to work with the Franklin Land Trust, Whately Land Preservation, state and federal conservation agencies, and/or with the Town of Whately.
- A4. Be responsive to the needs of farm and forest landowners and other agricultural businesses in town. Consider ways that the town might support the agricultural operations and businesses in Whately. Actively encourage agricultural protection and continued use of farms to sustain agriculture as a viable component of Whately’s social and economic base.

- A5. Continue advocating for the adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Communities that adopt the CPA can impose a small property tax surcharge which sets aside funds to address local needs related to open space protection, affordable housing, and historic preservation. Local CPA funds are matched by the Commonwealth through the Massachusetts Community Preservation Trust Fund.
- A6. Explore revisions to Whately's zoning bylaw that would result in greater protection of valued natural, agricultural, scenic, and cultural resources and would help to ensure any land development provides benefits that reflect the town's natural resource conservation goals.
- A7. Support the efforts of the Whately Historical Commission to designate additional scenic roads and to establish additional historic districts in Town.
- A8. Raise public awareness about estate planning and taxes and the property tax implications of different types of development as compared to protected open space, farmland, and forested land.
- A9. Work to prevent and clean-up road-side dumping and littering.

**Goal B: To protect and, where necessary, enhance the quality of Whately's natural resources including: groundwater and surface water quality and quantity; wildlife habitat; wetlands; and contiguous blocks of forested land.**

**Objectives:**

- B1. Focus conservation efforts on areas that abut protected lands to create larger areas of contiguous farm and forested land.
- B2. Support ongoing efforts to protect the quality and quantity of the drinking water supplied by the Whately Water Department, the Whately Water District and individual private wells.
- B3. Protect the quality and quantity of the groundwater and surface waters in Whately.
- B4. Build a comprehensive biological inventory in Whately using community volunteers. Consider how to improve upon existing information provided by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program's BioMap and Living Waters map showing core habitat areas and supporting natural landscapes.
- B5. Support the training of local volunteers in vernal pool certification.
- B6. Support the efforts of the Whately Conservation Commission to protect the wetland resources in town.

**Goal C: To maintain and improve the quality of Whately’s recreational facilities and programming and to maintain and improve the accessibility of facilities and programming to the disabled community. Particular attention should be paid to the town’s existing recreational facilities and those that connect people with the town’s diverse natural environments and landscapes. Encourage the development of new facilities and programming where feasible.**

**Objectives:**

- C1. Identify the best prospects for future roadside biking, walking and jogging paths in town and work to develop those facilities. Avoid the creation of conflicting policies that result in the potential unauthorized or unwanted use of private lands.
- C2. Collaborate to prioritize and secure funding for retrofits to existing recreational facilities in town to provide access to the disabled community.
- C3. Identify potential recreational access point(s) for the Connecticut River. Ensure that the access point(s), when built, would be accessible to the disabled community.
- C4. Collaborate with other entities that provide recreational facilities used by local residents. These include Massachusetts Audubon, private sporting clubs, private landowners, the Department of Fish and Game, Franklin Land Trust, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and other interested stakeholders. Good communication will help to ensure that these properties are managed in a way that suits the needs of all parties involved.
- C5. Promote existing and future recreational facilities and services by developing a guide to facilities, programs, and trail systems in town.
- C6. Re-evaluate recreational needs of residents of all ages and develop new programs and facilities as appropriate.
- C7. Explore opportunities for partnering with the open space committees of surrounding towns on land conservation projects that protect landscape-scale resources like contiguous forests, aquifers, core habitat areas, and trail systems.
- C8. Provide residents with information on the recreational resources in town and offer opportunities for the stewardship of these resources.