

Appendix E

- Chances of success: Moderate - will depend on quality of City's application and level of competition.
- 3) Program/Method: **Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund**
- Sponsoring Agency: National Park Service
- Approximate Funding Maximum: Unknown.
- Program Description: The first iteration of this Program provided up to 50% reimbursement towards the cost of acquisition or improvement of recreation land, including the development of active recreation facilities. Only selected areas of Gardner are eligible for these funds.
- Priority for pursuing: Moderate.
- Chances of success: Moderate depending on the funds to be made available upon the Program's reauthorization.
- 4) Program/Method: **Landscape Partnership Grants**
- Sponsoring Agency: MA Division of Conservation Services
- Approximate Funding Maximum: up to 1.5 million
- Deadline: Usually July each year
- Program Description: To permanently protect a minimum of 500 acres of land. Requires a partnership of non-profit, municipality or state/federal agency.
- 5) Program/Method: **Drinking Water Supply Protection Grants (DWSP)**
- Sponsoring Agency: Mass. EOEEA
- Approximate Funding Maximum: up to \$350,000
- Deadline: Usually July each year
- Program Description: Reimbursement funding for 50% of the acquisition cost of land or a conservation restriction. Eligible land must be within state determined Surface Water or

Groundwater Protection Zones of a Public Drinking Water Supply.

Studies and Construction/Maintenance

1) Program/Method:

The National Recreational Trails Act (NRTA)

Sponsoring Agency:

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

Approximate Funding Maximum:

\$2,000 - \$50,000.

Program Description:

Part of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Act, NRTA provides funds for trail projects. Eligible projects include: trail construction, land/easement acquisition, handicapped accessibility, interpretative areas/facilities, and education. Trails must be recreational, e.g. intra-city, on-road bikeways would probably not be eligible. A 20% local match is required (matching funds can be "non-cash"). Motorized and non-motorized trail use must be included in the grant with at least thirty percent of funds going to each activity with 40% going toward other diverse uses.

Priority for pursuing:

Moderate.

Chances of success: High with a good proposal.

2) Program/Method: **Greenways and Trails Demonstration Grant Program**

Sponsoring Agency: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

Approximate Funding Maximum: \$5,000.

Program Description: Greenways and trail projects are at the center of this program. Funding categories include: planning, research, mapping, public education and community outreach, ecological assessment, and trail construction, maintenance and expansion. In recent years focus has been placed on projects that either educate the public or work on river greenways. However, all greenway/trail projects are eligible with the exception of those confined to a single parcel of land.

Priority for pursuing: Moderate.

Chances of success: High with a good proposal.

Non-acquisition programs

1) Program/Method: **Conservation Restrictions (CRs)**

Sponsoring Agency: Massachusetts Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services (DCS)

Approximate Funding Maximum: Only technical support available.

Program Description: Conservation restrictions (CR's) are legal, enforceable agreements, authorized by the state, which are made between a landowner and a charitable organization, or a City. They are used primarily to keep land in a "natural or scenic open condition". Restrictions can be written so that certain uses are permitted and others prohibited, e.g. the current owner may continue to occupy an existing house on the land, but may restrict the

Funding Mechanisms and Programs

construction of any additional houses. Grantors of restrictions may also be able to benefit by reductions in various taxes including property, estate and income.

Priority for pursuing: High.

Chances of success: Depends on property owner.

2) Program/Method:

Assessment Act (M.G.L. Chapters 61, 61A and 61B)

Sponsoring Agency: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Agricultural Resources, and Department of Revenue (respectively)

Approximate Funding Maximum: No public funds available.

Program Description: These programs work by making available special property tax assessments to owners who agree to restrict their land to a particular use. Chapter 61 applies to lands actively devoted to forestry use, 61A applies to active agricultural lands, and 61B applies to public recreational lands like wildlife sanctuaries and golf courses. Generally properties are assessed at their current use value rather than their highest use. This usually translates into a substantial property tax savings for owners. The program also requires a right-of-first-refusal option to the City when property owners look to sell their land.

Priority for pursuing: Moderate.

Chances of success: Depends on property owner.

3) Program/Method:

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

Sponsoring Agency: Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Approximate Funding Maximum: No public funds available.

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Program Description:

This program insures that active farms stay in agricultural production. The state purchases a farmer's development rights. The price paid is the difference between the full market value of the property and its appraised agricultural value. A permanent restriction is then put in place prohibiting all non-agricultural uses on the parcel. The farmer is taxed at the agricultural value rather than the highest use value.

Priority for pursuing:

High.

Chances of success:

Depends on property owner.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Committee

PROS Members shall be:

- Conservation Commissioner appointed by Conservation Commission
- Youth Commissioner appointed by Youth Commission
- City Councilor appointed by Council President
- Planning Board Member appointed by Planning Board
- Conservation Agent
- City Forester
- Director of Comm. Dev. & Planning
- Director of Public Works
- One at-large member appointed by the Mayor

PROS duties:

- 1) To act in an advisory capacity on the general direction, policies and emphasis of Parks, Recreation and Open Space trends and needs of the City.
- 2) To prepare the Open Space & Recreation Plan and report to the Mayor annually on the implementation of the plan.
- 3) To prepare Forest Stewardship Plans and report to the Mayor annually on the implementation of those plans.
- 4) To review and make recommendations on the design and plans for Parks, Recreation and Open Space facilities and programs.
- 5) Advise on the care and control of trees, shrubs and growth in parks and open spaces.
- 6) To hire professional and support staff as it may from time to time require always subject to appropriation of funds therefor.
- 7) To perform other such duties related to Parks, Recreation and Open Space as may be required by the Mayor or City ordinance.