

CITY OF GARDNER, *Executive Department*

Mark Hawke, Mayor



February 19, 2015

Matthew A Beaton, EEA Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: City of Gardner 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Secretary Beaton:

It is with great pleasure that I submit the City of Gardner's 2015 Open Space and Recreation plan to the Department of Conservation Services. The City of Gardner is committed providing the public with adequate recreational opportunities as well as protecting our diverse natural resources.

This plan reflects a great deal of effort by the Open Space and Recreation Committee with collaboration from residents, City departments, boards and commissions. Public opinion was solicited at advertised public meetings, and through an online survey, which was advertised through the local newspaper, television, radio, and various social media accounts. Hard copies were also made available at the public library, senior center, and numerous City Hall offices.

This document will help guide the City in our conservation and recreation efforts in the years to come. I look forward to the continued support of the Division of Conservation Services.

Respectfully,

Mark Hawke,

Mayor

City Hall 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts 01440
Telephone: (978) 632-1900 • Facimile: (978) 630-3778 • e-mail: mayor@gardner-ma.gov

9348

RESOLUTION

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN 2015 - 2019 UPDATE

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GARDNER AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the proposals prepared by the Open Space and Recreation Committee for inclusion within the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) 2015-2019 Update; and

WHEREAS, the OSRP proposal does not seek nor require funding directly, but simply makes recommendations for preservation, maintenance, and for expansion of open space and recreation activity within City boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Open Space and Recreation Committee performed or reviewed all matters relating to the OSRP update at numerous publicly posted meetings, and further sponsored a city-wide survey and conducted two advertised public meetings for the primary purpose of soliciting public input regarding matters appropriate to the OSRP; and

WHEREAS, the OSRP has been developed and updated in accordance with requirements of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services; and

WHEREAS, the City Council supports the activity as being consistent with the City's goal of promoting quality programs for its citizens;

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council hereby extends its support and endorses the City's Open Space and Recreation Plan 2015-2019 Update to be submitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Conservation Services.

Vote

In City Council

November 3, 2014.....

Vote Passed

January 20, 2015.....

10 yeas, 0 nays, 1 absent.

Alonah Agnew.....Clerk

Presented to Mayor for approval

January 21, 2015.....

Approved on..... January 21, 2015.....


.....Mayor
Mayor's Signature

CITY OF GARDNER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION



October 28, 2014

Mr. Matthew Beaton, EEA Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) 2015 — 2019, City of Gardner

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Gardner Conservation Commission has reviewed the latest update of the City's OSRP and voted at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 27, 2014, to support that plan. Representatives of the Conservation Commission were active in the plan's preparation.

The plan's Goals and Objectives are consistent with the Commission's goals and objectives, and the Action Plan contains proposals that will enhance the Commission's ability to perform its regulatory duties.

Your support of this latest plan will be much appreciated.

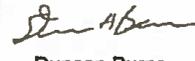
Sincerely,


Jeffrey D. Legros
Agent of the Conservation Commission


Gregory P. Dumas
Chairman

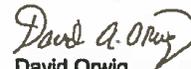

David Beauregard
Member


Norman Beauregard
Member


Duncan Burns
Member


Jane Cullen
Member


Donna Lehtinen
Member


David Orwig
Member

CITY OF GARDNER

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING



October 28, 2014

Mr. Matthew Beaton, EEA Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) 2015 — 2019, City of Gardner

Dear Secretary Beaton:

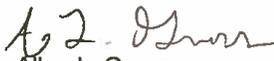
The purpose of this letter is to express the Planning Board's endorsement of the most recent update to its OSRP. The Planning Board reviewed the latest update and voted at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 28, 2014, to support that plan.

The plan was prepared by an Open Space and Recreation Committee with wide representation and participation from City Departments, Boards and Commissions. Outreach to the public was an important part of the plans preparation.

The plan's Goals and Objectives are consistent with other plans used by the Planning Board to guide its deliberations and decisions. The Action Plan contains achievable proposals and recommendations that will help the City meet the plan's goals and objectives.

Based on these facts, the Planning Board endorses this update and asks for your support.

Sincerely,


Allen L. Gross
Chairman

City Hall Annex, 115 Pleasant Street, Room 201, Gardner, Massachusetts 01440
Telephone: (978) 630-4011 ♦ Facsimile: (978) 632-1905 ♦ CDBG (978) 632-3800



April 2, 2015

RCVD APR 7 '15

Trevor Beauregard
Director of Community Development and Planning
City of Gardner - Manca Annex
115 Pleasant St. - Room 201
Gardner, MA 01440

Re: City of Gardner Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Mr. Beauregard,

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) staff completed a review of Gardner's Open Space and Recreation Plan. Staff used the Open Space Guidebook published by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services (DCS) "Open Space and Recreation Plan Requirements" to determine if the local planning document contained the required sections. Gardner's Plan is an excellent document, thorough and put together very well. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all local residents and officials for completing a well prepared document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Hume".

John Hume
Planning and Development Director



Charles D. Baker
GOVERNOR

Karyn E. Polito
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Matthew A. Beaton
SECRETARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Tel: (617) 626-1000
Fax: (617) 626-1181

March 24, 2015

Trevor Beauregard
Community Development and Planning
115 Pleasant St. – Room 201
Gardner, MA 01440

Re: Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Mr. Beauregard:

Thank you for submitting the draft Open Space and Recreation Plan for Gardner to this office for review and compliance with the current Open Space and Recreation Plan Requirements. This plan has been conditionally approved through March 2020. Conditional approval will allow the city to participate in DCS grant rounds through March 2020, and a grant award may be offered to the city. However, no final grant payments will be made until the plan is completed.

Once the following items are addressed, your plan will receive final approval:

1. Growth and Development Patterns – the Infrastructure section must include a section on transportation systems, including non-vehicular transportation such as walking and cycling.
2. Water Resources – please add sections on the city's wetlands and aquifer recharge areas as there must be verbiage on each topic, not just a map.
3. Vegetation – a discussion of public shade trees is required, as is a list of any rare, threatened, or endangered species in the city.
4. Fisheries and Wildlife – any wildlife corridors in city must be included here, as well as a list of any rare, threatened, or endangered species.
5. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments – this section should be expanded to include information on any unusual geologic features and cultural and historic areas. The plan currently has this information in the Landscape Characteristics section. That section should instead include a discussion of scenic resources and how development has changed and impacted them.
6. Environmental Challenges – please include information on landfills, erosion, chronic flooding, sedimentation, development impact, ground and surface water pollution, and forestry issues.
7. Section 5 – this section should begin with a discussion of why open space protection is so important, as well as a definition of the word protected. Be sure that the tables that list city-owned conservation and recreation properties include columns on ownership, management agency, current use, condition, recreation potential, type of grant (if any) used to purchase or

renovate the property, public access, zoning, and degree of protection. Any Conservation Restrictions or Agricultural Preservation Restrictions must be listed (not just the total acres of each category in the city). DCS recommends that communities do not specifically list land that it is interested in purchasing as it is a good way to put the land owner on notice and drive up asking prices. We suggest that you list general areas or types of land that you would be interested in purchasing instead.

8. Analysis of Needs – this section must be a narrative, not a bulleted list as you should explain why the list of items is needed by the public. Be sure that the Community's Needs section includes a discussion of how the SCORP relates to Gardner, as well as the needs of special groups, such as the handicapped and teens. The SCORP can be found online at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/dcs/scorp-2012-final.pdf>
9. Five-Year Action Plan – the goals and objectives should be listed in some sort of priority order and have a funding source identified for each. It's general practice that the action plan be in a table format to make it easier to read. EEA now allows for seven-year action plans. If you expand the action plan over seven years, the plan will receive an additional two years of approval.
10. Letters of Review – a letter from the regional planning agency is needed.
11. Maps – the Inventory map should show ownership and the Action Plan map printed oddly, so I can't review it.
12. ADA – the ADA section is missing the required facility inventory forms. They can be found in Appendix G of the Open Space and Recreation Planner's Workbook online at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/dcs/osrp-workbook08.pdf>. Also missing is the letter that appoints the ADA coordinator from the mayor.

Congratulations on undertaking such an important task! Please contact me at (617) 626-1171 or melissa.cryan@state.ma.us if you have any questions or concerns, and I look forward to reviewing your final plan.

Sincerely,



Melissa Cryan
Grants Manager

Public Survey Questions and Results

1 Is the City adequately served by current Open Space?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	28.9%	67
No	52.6%	122
No Opinion	18.5%	43
<i>answered question</i>		232
<i>skipped question</i>		8

2 How satisfied are you with the places for children and youth to play and recreate?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	5.0%	12
Satisfied	45.0%	107
Dissatisfied	50.0%	119
<i>answered question</i>		238
<i>skipped question</i>		2

3 How satisfied are you with the places for children and youth to play and recreate?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	5.0%	12
Satisfied	38.5%	92
Dissatisfied	56.5%	135
<i>answered question</i>		239
<i>skipped question</i>		1

4 How important is it to you to preserve the following?

Activity	Somewhat Important	Most Important ²	Least Important	No Opinion	Response Count
City-owned Open Spaces for active recreation (ex, playgrounds, ball fields, team sports)	78	231	4	3	238
City-owned Open Spaces specifically for children.	78	228	4	4	236
Open Spaces for passive recreation and aesthetics (ex. walking/running trails, cross country, benches, picnic areas)	76	227	6	2	235
City-owned Open Spaces to meet our water supply needs.	82	218	4	14	236
Historic places	92	185	44	6	235
Farmlands	97	181	41	11	233
Open Spaces for hunting and fishing	69	116	105	15	236
answered question					239
skipped question					1

5 Please check the recreation areas in the City that you have visited and enjoyed in the last 12 months.

Area	Response Count
Dunn Pond	182
MWCC	175
City sidewalks	169
North Central Pathway (bike path)	135
Monument Park	132
Children's play areas	126
Ice Skating rink	83
Baseball field	77
Hiking/cross country skiing trails	72
Soccer field	72
Municipal Golf Course	61
Greenwood Outdoor Pool	57

Road biking	52
Otter River	51
Protected natural undeveloped lands	48
Basketball court	45
Tennis court	26
Lake Wampanog	26
Softball field	25
Other (please specify)	10
Volleyball court	6
<i>answered question</i>	240
<i>skipped question</i>	0

Please select the top three (3) recreation facilities you feel are needed in Gardner.

Facility	Response Count
Reopening Greenwood Indoor Pool	114
Additional/Improved children's play areas	90
Improvements to Greenwood Outdoor Pool	81
Additional/Improved City sidewalks	62
Additional neighborhood parks/playgrounds	60
Additional natural conservation areas	55
Other (please specify)	54
Improvements to Dunn Pond	47
Additional bike trails	40
Improved bike routes	33
Additional soccer field	30
Better access to Otter River	25
Additional baseball field	10
Additional ice skating rink	8
Additional tennis courts	7
Additional softball field	4
<i>answered question</i>	240
<i>skipped question</i>	0

7 If your household members travel to adjacent communities for recreational activities, please specify what type of activities.

	Response Count
	134
<i>answered question</i>	134
<i>skipped question</i>	106

Popular responses included: swimming, playgrounds, hiking, parks, soccer, golf and fishing

8 How important is it for members of your household to use sidewalks in your neighborhood for recreation or travel?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Most Important	50.8%	121
Somewhat Important	38.2%	91
Least Important	7.6%	18
No Opinion	3.4%	8
	<i>answered question</i>	238
	<i>skipped question</i>	2

9 Would it be important for members of your family to use bike lane facilities if available?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Most Important	19.3%	46
Somewhat Important	42.4%	101
Least Important	31.9%	76
No Opinion	6.3%	15
	<i>answered question</i>	238
	<i>skipped question</i>	2

10	Should the City act to (Check your TWO highest priorities)	Response Count
	Improve its conservation/open space land with low-key amenities	73
	Construct new recreational facilities	75
	Acquire additional open space	37
	Improve existing recreational facilities	155
	Repair and improve existing sidewalks	93
	Construct additional sidewalks	26
	<i>answered question</i>	238
	<i>skipped question</i>	2

11	Rate the following areas for investment by the City to make improvements or provide new facilities.			
Facility	Somewhat Important	Least Important	No Opinion	Response Count
Bicycle routes (off-road)	120	46	11	240
Bicycle routes (roadway shoulders)	115	67	14	240
Sidewalks	107	30	7	240
Children's play equipment (swings, slides, climbing, etc)	86	10	5	240
Cross country skiing	79	117	31	240
Dog control	81	81	36	240
Dog park	71	68	24	240
Hiking trails	108	26	10	240
Areas for hunting and fishing	53	131	28	240
Lighting	104	30	11	240
Safety (crime related)	55	14	7	240
Sitting benches	117	62	9	240
Sledding	132	60	8	240
Team court sport facilities (basketball, tennis, volleyball)	126	57	15	240
Team field sport facilities (baseball, football, soccer)	111	56	12	240
Trees	101	36	9	240

Walking/jogging path	104	26	3	240
Water facilities (outdoors)	85	31	11	240
Water facilities (indoors)	66	44	11	240
Skate Park (skateboard, bmx bike)	84	85	17	240
Disc golf course	64	98	35	240
Other (please specify)				16
				answered question
				240
				skipped question
				0

12

Would you support an increase in your taxes to pay for improvements and/or new recreational facilities?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	70.8%	167
No	29.2%	69
answered question		236
skipped question		4

13

Please tell us about yourself.

	Response Percent	Response Count
I live in the City	83.3%	199
I own property in the City	50.2%	120
I have children that attend school in the City	41.4%	99
I am 18 or over	82.0%	196
answered question		239
skipped question		1

14

In your own words, please provide additional thought, comments, recommendations, or further explanations about the City's open space network

	Response Count
	90
<i>answered question</i>	90
<i>skipped question</i>	150

Popular keywords included: Parks, playground, community, children, City , pool, playground and soccer